

APR 19 1957

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COMMENT

At the Crossroads of Europe

THE DOUBLE-THINK IN U.N.

D. P. O'CONNELL

BREATHING MARBLE

The Life of Hilaire Belloc

D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

ST. BENEDICT JOSEPH LABRE

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Given this then, what is left? In the matter of faith, here again you have helped. Unwittingly perhaps, but nonetheless true, but here we are far removed from any Catholic church, or devotional centre. The people in the main out here have little (if any) religious beliefs.

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THE MONTH

New Series

APRIL 1957

VOL. 17. No. 4

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The Month is edited from 114 Mount Street, W.I, GROsvenor 2995, and published by Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 6 & 7 Clifford Street, London, W.I. Subscriptions may be addressed to any bookseller, or, in Great Britain, direct to the Publishers; in U.S.A. to British Publications, Inc., 30 East 60th Street, New York 22, N.Y.; in France to W. H. Smith & Son, 248 Rue de Rivoli, Paris. The annual subscription is 32s. 6d., U.S.A. \$6.

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COMMENT

At the Crossroads of Europe

IMMEDIATE international problems of the past five months—Suez, the tension between Israel and the Arabs, our own commitments and United States policy in the Near East—may well have taken our minds off Europe. Yet there at its centre, at the crossroads of Europe, stands Germany, whose political and economic revival since 1950—we are speaking of the Federal Republic—falls little short of the *Wunder* that the Germans themselves attribute to it. Western Germany's growth in power and increase in industrial production confront us more and more forcibly with the question: when is the future of Germany to be settled? When, if ever, is Germany to be reunified? When is a final peace treaty to be concluded? Ten years ago, few would have imagined that Germany could have recovered on so generous a scale from so disastrous a defeat and collapse; fewer even, that Germany would have been exercising today such an influence on the international balance of power.

Of the many problems that arise from the present German situation, we wish here to confine ourselves to one; that of the relations between the Federal Republic and the puppet State set up by the Russians in Eastern Germany which they have dignified with the name of German Democratic Republic. For convenience we may refer to them as Western and Eastern Germany, though of course the West does not recognise the status of the East and the disparity in numbers, resources and prosperity is all too evident.

The division of Germany into two sections was not the original intention of the Allies. There were schemes afloat, for instance, the creation of an Austro-Bavarian State, and Roosevelt at one period favoured a dismemberment into five regions. But by the summer of 1945 these notions had been abandoned and the Potsdam protocol established a Four Power control of Germany, which however was to be administered as a single economic unit; reparations were to be paid to the Allies but enough was to be left to permit the German people to subsist without external

assistance. The division of Germany is the result of Russian inability to work with the Western Powers. The Democratic Republic came into being as a counterpart to and parody of the Federal Republic. The solution was never intended; it is unnatural and cannot last, yet it is extremely difficult to see how it could be and indeed, in the end, will be reversed.

Dr. Adenauer's policy from the start has been honest, straightforward and consistent. It is to integrate Germany into Western Europe, in close association with other European countries and even, in a federated Western Europe. In a radio interview on 17 December, 1952, he declared: "My policy is, and remains, directed towards the United States of Europe." His profession has been matched with practice. He encouraged the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community, steered the European Defence measure through the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* with rare skill, despite the opposition of the Social Democrats, and was genuinely disappointed when, as the consequence of the French failure to ratify that measure, Germany had to be admitted into N.A.T.O. He would have preferred the European to the national solution. This was again made clear in an address at Berlin in 1951:

A United Europe can never be an aggressor. The plurality of members of which it would consist would never permit aggression or an aggressive policy. A United Europe will not attack, but it will be able to defend itself against an attack. No power which wishes for peace can object to this. Germany can be a very strong factor for peace. Germany experienced the last war with all its horrors on her own soil and at very close quarters. She knows well that another war would be still more terrible, still more cruel, and she knows too that she lies geographically nearest the danger zone. Germany therefore—and I repeat and emphasise this—will be a particularly strong element of peace in a united Europe.

Like every other German politician and for that matter every German, Dr. Adenauer insists that this division into West and East is unnatural and invalid and must be terminated. Broadcasting to East Germany on 5 May, 1955, after the conclusion of the Paris agreements, he stated:

The Federal government will continue to strive for the freedom of all Germans. In this hour fifty million citizens of the Federal

Republic, together with their government, are thinking of the millions of their brothers and sisters who are separated from us and are forced to live without freedom and without justice. We call to them: "You belong to us and we belong with you. You can always depend on us because together with the free world we shall not rest until you are again in possession of human rights and are peacefully united with us in one State." Politically we have one goal: in a free and united world, a free and united Germany.

Unlike the German Socialist opposition, Dr. Adenauer has not allowed this notion of a reunited Germany to become an obsession and to take precedence of every other political objective. He has steadily worked for closer integration with the West and resisted any temptation to use Germany's central position to wring further concessions from the Allies. He has committed himself and Germany to the Western world. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, have placed reunification at the head of their foreign policy. They opposed the European Defence plan and German rearmament on the grounds that these would make reunification more difficult. Their opposition was particularly marked under Herr Schumacher who made the Social Democrats the national as distinct from the European party in Germany and whose emphasis was on an independence for Germany that bordered dangerously on neutralism. It has been less pronounced in the past three years under his successor, Dr. Ollenhauer, and after the failure of the Geneva conference of autumn, 1955 and the Soviet intervention more recently in Hungary, is becoming more and more a merely political or academic opposition. Dr. Adenauer's European attitude has been severely criticised by Social Democrats but, should the Social Democrats be returned to power in this year's elections, they will have in effect to adopt precisely the same attitude.

The view of both the Federal Republic and the Western Powers is that free elections must be held throughout Germany, West and East, and an All-German government be formed, with which the Allies would then conclude the peace treaty. The East German State is recognised only on a *de facto* basis as an instrument of Soviet policy. The Russians, on the other hand, argue that first of all a provisional government must be created from both East and West, and their presupposition is that the two halves of Germany shall be regarded as equal halves, in spite of the vast disparity in

numbers. The Four Powers will then make a peace settlement with this provisional government, which will involve the withdrawal of all occupation troops. Finally, when the troops have retired, "free" elections will be held. The difference between these programmes is evident. West Germany is really claiming that the division is invalid and that the Four Powers who are responsible for it must put the matter right. The Russians are assuming that there are two properly constituted States in Germany and that the burden of reunion rests primarily on the Germans. This means of course that the Federal Republic in the Russian view ought to acknowledge the East German government as an equal partner and together they should fuse the two parts into the one whole. It is sometimes argued by critics of Dr. Adenauer that in any election in Germany the Communists would secure very few votes and that the Russian solution, though less favourable, would work reasonably well. But Dr. Adenauer's suspicions of Russia are deep and well founded.

The Russian attitude has hardened since 1954, when Germany was admitted to N.A.T.O. and committed herself to rearmament. During his Moscow visit in September 1955, Dr. Adenauer was pointedly reminded by Marshal Bulganin that membership of a military organisation, directed against Russia and "other peace loving European nations" was not the way to bring about Germany's reunification. He added that the question could not be solved properly "unless and until the German people *united their efforts*" to do so, and that the reunification of Germany was above all a matter of concern for the Germans themselves. In the same month Bulganin assured a delegation from East Germany that it would be necessary to reckon for some time with the existence of two States in Germany.

The Soviet attitude was made even clearer on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the setting up of the East German State. A Soviet mission visited Berlin, headed by Suslov, a member of the Praesidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party. Referring to the Geneva conference, then almost at hand, he stated that people in the West were saying that the success of the conference depended on the question of German reunification. But, he went on, this question has been seriously complicated by the agreements of the Federal Republic with the West. The real way to reunion was through co-operation between

the two Germanies. This, he declared, was the official Soviet view. The Soviet Union

has always proceeded from the belief that the question of re-establishing German reunity was primarily the business of the Germans themselves. This task could be considerably facilitated by extensive co-operation between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic in all spheres of international German life and in conditions of complete equality.

He stated that without such collaboration the question could not be settled at all, in other words, that the price for even opening the matter with Russia was the recognition of Eastern Germany and on "conditions of complete equality."

Russia, he agreed, was happy to have diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic, but it was self-evident that its claims to represent the whole of Germany could not be accepted.

In the course of the Moscow talks the representatives of the Federal Republic were told clearly and definitely that the Federal Republic is only one part of Germany and exercised jurisdiction over the territory under its sovereignty. The other part of Germany is the Democratic Republic which is by no means some sort of geographical conception. It is an objective and quite weighty reality, which firmly exists, develops, prospers and has a great future.¹

In theory, every German favours reunification. There are many, however, in the Federal Republic who view some of its consequences with a certain trepidation. It would certainly lower the German standard of living, for East Germany is naturally poorer and less industrialised than the West and it has been savagely exploited by the Russians. Since 1945 forty-five per cent of its industrial potential has been removed, and this is in addition to nearly another quarter destroyed during the war. In the same decade more than two million persons have left the area, with the result that in many places the land is left untilled. Reunion, these Germans fear, would put an end to the remarkable prosperity

¹ When mention is made of Soviet objections to any German rearmament, we have to remember that the East State began to rearm more than six years ago. Even in 1948 the Soviet authorities recruited ex-Wehrmacht soldiers for frontier Alert Detachments. By 1951 this force numbered 65,000 and had its first manoeuvres. At that time one-quarter of the force consisted of officers, thus making it capable of rapid expansion.

which the Federal Republic is now enjoying. In addition, Western Germany has absorbed her ten million refugees, both the *Heimatsvertriebene* and the *Zugewanderte*, in an extraordinary manner and, though there exist strong refugee organisations, especially among the Sudeten Germans from Bohemia and Moravia, the 1953 elections brought only a 5.9 percentage vote to the B.H.E. party which officially represents the refugees. In other words, refugees proper, that is, from the territory now under Czech or Polish rule, and the immigrants from East Germany are being absorbed in the Western community and feel themselves there at home.

On the other hand, there is considerable alarm in the Federal Republic lest East and West Germany drift spiritually as well as politically far apart. In 1954, a national movement was inaugurated for an indivisible Germany. It was an all-party movement under the presidency of Herr Kaiser, minister for All-German affairs. Its purpose was psychological rather than political, to work, namely, against the growing sense of spiritual estrangement and even hopelessness in East Germany. The national rising in Hungary has recently shown how slight can be the influence of a decade of propaganda and conditioning when a people resist it, and it is unlikely that the inhabitants of East Germany have taken kindly to Communism or to the Russians. The fact that more than ten per cent of its population has emigrated within a decade is sure evidence of that, as was the workers' resistance in June 1953. Nevertheless, oppression can breed a passiveness and a mood of despair, even though it cannot compel conviction. Nor must we forget that a certain proportion of the young men who come Westwards from East Germany return subsequently, often in spite of well-paid jobs. They have grown up in an atmosphere of regimentation and cannot live in the free world.

THE DOUBLE-THINK IN U.N.

By

D. P. O'CONNELL

THE WORLD has been shocked in recent weeks by Russian imperialism in Hungary, though why it should have been is difficult to see unless we have failed to understand Soviet doctrine on the functions of U.N. and on the relationships between the Soviet and the satellites on the one hand, and between the Soviet and the "capitalist" world on the other. What intellectual integrity is there in an attitude which brands the United Kingdom and France as aggressors in Egypt and at the same time repudiates or ignores the similar resolutions of the General Assembly on withdrawal from Hungary? By what trick of logic does the Soviet Union recognise North Korea as a sovereign state but reject recognition of South Korea on the ground that the "imperialists" have not yet been removed? European countries abrogated their independence and became subservient to the United States when they joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation; but the military alliance between the Soviet Union and the eastern European States does not transform the latter into underlings of Russia. To make sense of these apparently contradictory views it is essential to grasp that they can be reconciled only by the acceptance of the Soviet view of a "stratified" international law—that is, in the words of M. Krylov, "various layers of international law" of which the most "democratic" is that of Russia and her associates and the least "democratic" that of the Western nations. This view of international law asserts that as the number of socialist States increases so the character of international law will gradually become more "democratic." In fact, this is no more than another attempt by Soviet jurists to suggest that only the foreign policy of the Soviet Union can be truly democratic in purpose.

It is scarcely surprising that the attempt to interpret international law in this way has led to considerable confusion amongst Soviet and Communist jurists generally. The official Marxist view of law has been explained by M. Vyshinsky as an aggregate of rules of conduct which express the will of the dominant class, guaranteed by the coercive force of the State. This definition can of course apply only to those societies where there is a "dominant" class and hence a "dominated" class. And *ex hypothesi* such classes do not exist in the Soviet State where the means of production are owned by the whole people and where, therefore, there can be no "dominated" class. But this means that some other definition must be found for the law of the Soviet Union—although one might have reasonably assumed that Soviet law, being a form of law in general would at least have to conform to the basic definition. This, however, presented no problems for M. Vyshinsky who asserts that: "Soviet law is the will, single and indestructible, of the whole Russian people." But this at once involves a conflict with fundamental Marxist ideology. The Marx-Engels theory of state and law envisages that there will be a stage on the road to communism when some of the trappings of "bourgeois" law will inevitably have to be retained. As the communist society becomes stabilised, however, the necessity for "law and the state" will no longer obtain and the ultimate goal of a stateless society based on mutual recognition of one another's rights will have been achieved. Law is, therefore, only an instrument of a dominating class—remove the class, says Marxist theory, and the law will become unnecessary.

To maintain the Marxist view of law and at the same time ensure that no suggestion is made which would imply that there is a class in the Soviet Union which is dominated by means of the laws of another class is, therefore, logically impossible. And in recognition of this fact M. Vyshinsky is forced to abandon logic. "In capitalist societies," he says, "allusions to the will of the people as a basis of law serve as a screen to veil the exploiting nature of the bourgeois state." In other words, in capitalist societies all law is, as the Marxist claims, nothing but an ideological weapon in the hands of the ruling classes. But M. Vyshinsky goes on, "in our country, the law is the will of the people too, but the principle is different. This is the "double-think," the reconciliation of policy and theory which compels the Marxist

jurist and politician to think in contradictory terms. Hence he can only jettison logic. This is his last resort. The attempt to develop a suitable theory of law on the basis of the Marxist interpretation of society has clearly failed. This cannot, however, be officially admitted and in order to support the façade the process of "double-think" must be utilised. This dilemma in Soviet legal theory is, naturally, transferred to the Soviet conception of international law and the result is the series of apparent paradoxes in the international actions of the Soviet Union.

It is clear that Soviet diplomacy and international law is guided by the necessity to maintain the myth of adherence to a strictly "democratic" view of Soviet law coupled with the Marxist view that all law is essentially "undemocratic." This prevents any possibility of there ever being a genuine attempt by the Soviet Union to live in "peaceful co-existence" with the Western powers. All the legal paraphernalia of the West is but the instrument of a dominant class; that of the Soviet Union is the will of the people. "The principle is different," which means that the Soviet acts in the international scene with no regard for truth or logic. Fundamentally, indeed, it is impossible for her to act in any other way. To expect that changes of personality will bring about changes in the Soviet approach to international affairs is to be guilty of the worst *naïveté*. It was not the personality of Stalin which sealed the fate of Poland; nor is it the personality of Bulganin which has shattered Hungary. The key lies in the basic approach of Marxist theory. According to this all nations have to destroy their existing social and economic structures and to unite themselves into a world union of socialist republics.

Once this basic factor is understood it becomes quite clear that changes in Soviet attitude towards international law are not changes of doctrine but solely changes of political expediency. After the 1917 Revolution Russian theorists repudiated international law altogether as "a system of social relationships which correspond to the interests of the dominant class." Since the Communist and capitalist worlds were dedicated, like rival classes within the State, to inevitable class antagonism, there could be no law between them. Conversely, since Communist States had the same class basis there could be only one law and it could not be international. Later it was seen that temporary

compromise was necessary between the rival societies, and so in 1926 Pashukanis proposed that international law could exist as a "form of temporary compromises between two antagonistic class systems" when neither is able to secure domination of the other. International law has now become "inter-class" law. Korovin, the leading Soviet international lawyer, in the 1930's explored this conception further and took the view that there were several international law systems, an American, an imperialist-colonial, a European, and a capitalist-socialist. The starting point of this doctrine is the superiority of State law over international law, so that the latter binds only so long as the State agrees to it.

This explains the Soviet insistence on the concept of State sovereignty. As a legal conception "sovereignty" affords a guarantee to the Soviet against Western intervention in the Soviet itself or in those countries within its orbit. In other words it is the legal form through which the entrenchment of the Communist world is achieved. By the same token, however, "sovereignty" cannot constitute an entrenchment of the Western world against the Soviet. It is an absolute conception when claimed for Communist countries but a relative one when applied to potentially rival countries. So Korovin wrote in 1946 relative to defeated Germany and Japan that "in the interests of the preservation and consolidation of sovereignty, as a factor of universal progress, it becomes necessary to limit to a considerable degree the sovereignty of the most aggressive nations. Only peace-loving States should have the privilege of unlimited sovereignty."

A similar "double-think" takes place in the question of equality of States. Korovin asserts that the Soviet is the champion of the thesis that all States are equal. In practice this amounts to the proposition that no decision or rule of law is binding on the Soviet unless agreed to by it. So Korovin says the Soviet insists on unanimity and will never accept a majority decision either of the U.N. or the International Court. When it comes to the question of intervention in another state, however, "equality" loses any coherent meaning. Korovin in 1946 rejected intervention only when it was for the purpose of suppressing a socialist revolution within another State, and admitted it when a socialist State intervenes to suppress a "fascist counter-revolutionary"

movement in another socialist State. Indeed, Korovin said that "intervention might become the mightiest instrument of progress, a surgical measure to ease the birth of a new world."

The contradictory applications of the theories of sovereignty and equality in the respective issues of Suez and Hungary is thus anticipated in doctrine by ten years, and the usefulness of international law as a political device becomes clear. On the one hand the obligation to respect territorial integrity and political independence is a technique for guaranteeing the socialist achievement. On the other hand, the elimination from international law of elements unfavourable to Soviet policy is justified on the thesis that "anti-democratic survivals and forms" still exist. So in recent years a distinction has emerged between the basic principles of international law, eternally valid, and the "democratic" manner of their application. The distinction forms the basis of doctrine of Krylov, the Soviet Judge on the International Court. He defines international law as a "superstructure representing the results of the competition and co-operation of the dominant classes of the various states in their external relations." This means that it expresses the wills of States, and if there are dominant classes there are also dominated classes. So Vyshinsky admits that international law is a coercive order by which a group of States imposes its will on inferior States.

When the dominant class is capitalist, the principle of equality is involved to deny validity to the legal forms of domination—as when the United Kingdom is branded as "aggressor" in Egypt; when it is Communist the forms of domination are approved as "democratic." Krylov asserts that it is possible to "distinguish various layers of international law of more or less democratic shade," by which he means that the same concept is applied differently according to the political circumstances. Soviet writers approve of the recognition of North Korea and the non-recognition of South Korea. Until this year they denied that Jordan was a sovereign State because it was in fact a basis of British imperialism in the Middle East. Poland, however, with a Russian marshal as head of its forces, was described as a sovereign State, and so presumably would Egypt be even if Russian "volunteers" were entrenched there. So long as the form is kept straight the concept may be used to cover any Soviet policy. So we are told that the Soviet denies the validity of

annexation, and that the Baltic countries were incorporated into the Soviet as an autonomous region of their own "free will." Parts of Finland were annexed to prevent Finland "losing her sovereignty" as an American base. Molotov was certainly not exaggerating when he said that "sovereignty in Soviet international practice has been elevated to a new historical level and has taken on a new sociopolitical meaning."

Given that the world is devoted to economic competition and that the forms of law are adapted to political objectives, the Soviet's manipulation of the U.N. appears quite consistent. U.N. exists not to achieve justice because this is a conception repudiated by Marxist theorists; it exists to promote the policies of its members. Vyshinsky in 1948 described U.N. as an organisation under the domination of reactionary groups, and from then until June 1950 there was a steady boycott of U.N. The Korean War demonstrated to Russia that she could not afford to act outside U.N., but must work through it. From 1950 therefore U.N. has exhibited an irreconcilable conflict between the Communist and non-Communist worlds. So long as the West accepts a legal structure as stable and objective it will be at a disadvantage. The "double-think" gives Russia a considerable area of manoeuvrability, enabling her to capitalise on any division between European and Asian opinion, and at the same time guaranteeing her against any international decision she might find inconvenient. There is grave danger that U.N. might be the occasion of a paralysis of the West while allowing full play to Russian policy in areas such as the Middle East vital to both sides. The contrasting results of U.N. action on the Middle East and Hungarian crises afford no ground for satisfaction to the West.

By what intellectual trick does the Soviet assert that "sovereignty" in the case of Egypt means immunity from outside intervention but in the case of Hungary means subjection to Soviet policy? Russian theorists have devoted much attention to this question and their argument is another superb illustration of the "double-think." The traditional Soviet technique of incorporation consists in the establishment of a political and social system with the abolition of all but Communist political influence, followed by the adoption of an economic programme to conform to that of Moscow. The process began in Russia itself where the "sovereign" republics "voluntarily" delegated

their sovereignty to the U.S.S.R. This experience indicated the pattern to be adopted in Europe after 1945. The key to the theory of Soviet domination of the satellites is found in an article by Mankovskii in 1950 where he explained that the Soviet and the satellites are the same politically but in different stages. The Soviet is in the stage of transition from socialism to communism, the Peoples' Democracies from capitalism to socialism. Russia, as the most developed in "democratic" achievement enjoys a natural pre-eminence and leadership in the world progress towards Communism, and so has a rightful legal superiority over the satellites. In essence the theory is no different from that elaborated at the time of the Spanish Civil War when the Spanish National Front proclaimed an anti-fascist programme which Russian writers described as the transition from capitalism to socialism.

During this preliminary stage the class-war situation is considered to be acute. Fascism must be eliminated. By fascism is meant nothing more than capitalism in its last stage. When the Hungarian revolt, therefore, is described as fascist this does not mean that the Soviet seriously believes it is Nazi, only that it is extreme capitalism. An anti-fascist movement is an anti-capitalist one, and the Soviet owes a duty to protect the socialist movement from a "fascist" counter-evolution. For this reason, we are told, "in the world movement to socialism the primary role belongs to the Russian people." For the past five years the satellites have exhibited distressing dissent from this proposition, but although the Soviet has been compelled to allow some liberalisation and even mild heresy in the satellites themselves official Russian theorists have not greatly shifted their ground, and at no time have they admitted that the satellites are free to adopt other than a Communist system.

Indeed the basic proposition is that the active force which secures a monolithic unity of Soviet and satellites is the leadership of the Communist party operating behind a constitutional curtain. In the Soviet constitution the Party is described as having a leading role. This formula is not reproduced in the satellite constitutions but the same policy is represented by formulae about the "struggle against monarcho-fascist dictatorship" (Bulgaria, Art. 1), or against "fascism, reaction and imperialism" (Rumania, Art. 1; Czechoslovakia, Arts. 36, 37). *Pravda* said

on 14 January, 1949: "Thus after the decisive defeat of reaction in the countries of Central and South Eastern Europe, the new régime of the Peoples' Democracies has been consolidated and the leading and directing role of the Communist parties has been unreservedly solidified." This, we are told, does not mean that Russia's leading role can be abdicated. On the contrary, as Farberov writes, "the development of the people's democracy, even in this new stage, proceeds in an atmosphere of a fierce class struggle, which, in accordance with further development towards socialism will not become weaker, but on the contrary will grow more acute." Intervention to promote the success of the socialist movement in this struggle is regarded as quite legitimate. So the Soviet intervened in Rumania and forced King Michael to appoint a Communist as premier, so establishing the preliminary step to control. It intervened to prevent Czechoslovakia from signing the Marshall Plan. It intervened in China to deny the Nationalist government use of Port Arthur.

Once political subservience to Moscow is achieved the second step is economic subservience. In 1949 a Council of Mutual Economic Aid was set up in Moscow and comprised Russia and the satellites. In a sense it is a Communist Marshall Plan, but whereas the latter was clearly a voluntary arrangement the Russian one is not. The permanent secretariat in Moscow has the right to send observers and advisers to member states, and these are "obliged to accept and follow their advice." Was Egypt scheduled to proceed down the same garden path as Albania?

It is to be noted that Soviet domination is not direct but per medium of legal forms. These are reciprocal trade agreements, allocations of raw materials, control of currency, and treaties for military assistance. Until the Hungarian revolt it was possible for Soviet intervention to operate through these forms, so keeping the question within the domain of "domestic jurisdiction." Once the Warsaw Pact was repudiated, however, the veiling forms vanished and Soviet imperialism stood exposed for what it really is. There was then a hasty effort to fabricate new forms, and the speciousness of these is so obvious that our common sense is outraged. First the constitutional government of Hungary calls on U.N. for assistance in resisting Soviet intervention. That government is then virtually kidnapped by the Soviet and a puppet government set up which proceeds to with-

draw the mandate to the U.N. and to declare that the matter is entirely one of "domestic jurisdiction." From that moment on the Soviet has a decided tactical advantage in the U.N. debates.

This is indeed an age of formulae. More than at any other time in history politics is conducted per medium of abstract definition, and words have assumed a new significance. Quite respectable and morally neutral words like "colonialism" or "imperialism" have been loaded with emotional content so that their mere utterance secures an initial debating advantage and instantly clouds the real issue. The formula, in short, has become a dynamic political instrument. Nowhere is this more clear than in the practical application of the "rights" guaranteed in the Soviet constitution, and so manifestly outraged in Hungary. Freedom to criticise the basic policy of one's government is recognised by Western political scientists and lawyers as an indispensable test of personal freedom. In a constitutional democratic State the citizen has the right to oppose, and this is considered a valuable and inviolable right to be interfered with only in the most exceptional circumstances. This is not, however, the view taken by the Soviet jurist of his constitution. Vyshinsky says that "in the bourgeois study of public law the department concerning so-called personal rights is the most false and hypocritical department of law." Therefore, although the Soviet constitution by Article 125 gives the Russian citizen "freedom of speech and freedom of the press" it is clear from an examination of cases decided in the Soviet courts that the realm of legitimate criticism open to the citizens of the Soviet Union is extremely limited. Issues such as the desirability of socialism, the Soviet form of government, the public ownership of property, and the one-party system are taboo for the ordinary citizen. These issues have been decided for the future by the Communist Party and criticism of these "basic principles" can only stir up confusion among the masses of the people at a time when the government is putting these very principles into immediate effect.

It is important to appreciate that so far as the Russian lawyer is concerned there is here no real contradiction. The Soviet constitutional guarantees exist "in order to strengthen the social system," and it follows that any criticism of the régime, and, even more so, any attempt to change it, are excluded from the

protection of the constitution. A similar paradox arises with regard to freedom of the press. Article 125 states that "civil rights are insured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organisations printing presses, paper stocks and other material requisites for exercising these rights." But the press is the property of the State, which means the Communist Party and is subject to the censorship of the so-called *Glavlit* (Chief Administration of Literature and Publications). This institution is empowered to prohibit the publication and distribution of published works and any such publication requires *Glavlit* permission. For the purpose of its censorship the *Glavlit* has its authorised agents attached to the editorial staffs, typographical plants, broadcasting stations and even telegraph and post offices. It is significant that the only exemptions from censorship are the publications of the Communist International and certain important committees of the Communist Party.

In these questions of freedom of speech and freedom of the press lies the core of the conflict of opinion between Russia and the Western nations on the subject of freedom of expression. The Communist point of view stresses that the Soviet citizen has the greatest guarantees of personal freedom of expression. The ownership of the press is in the hands of the people and, therefore, publication facilities are available to a larger number of people than can be the case in the bourgeois countries where the press is privately owned. But the democratic nations test democracy not so much by the number of people who are able to express themselves because they own the means of expression, but by the latitude allowed by the State to any single individual to say whatever he pleases.

Another aspect of the Russian view of the rights of the individual was demonstrated by M. Vyshinsky at the end of the war when he urged upon the U.N. that each country should be allowed to compel its own refugees to return home. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt led the opposition to this proposal and asked that the United Nations aid all refugees who refused to go back to their original countries. To this M. Vyshinsky retorted: "We refuse to accept such toleration." And, in line with this disregard for the individual, the Soviet government would not allow Russian women who married Englishmen during the war to leave Soviet Russia and join their husbands. This policy was further advanced

by a law of 1947 which forbade Russian women to marry foreigners at all.

In view of this consistently Marxist approach of the individual and his rights, the sceptical reception by Russia of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 was not at all surprising. After obstructing the deliberations of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and accusing the Western powers of "hypocrisy and capitalistic propaganda," the Soviet Union and all the States of the Soviet bloc abstained from voting. To demonstrate that the Soviet Union had great regard for human rights, however, Soviet writers waxed jubilant over the Russian ratification of the Genocide Convention. But the Convention in its definition of genocide omitted to mention mass deportations and mass internments in forced labour camps as a means of obliterating the identity of a national group. That these are favourite methods used by the Soviet authorities is no secret and indeed such mass deportations were duly and publicly acknowledged by the U.S.S.R. in 1945 before the Genocide Convention was drafted. This gap in the Convention no doubt made Soviet ratification much easier—but in any case ratification was made with the proviso that the International Court of Justice should have no jurisdiction in disputes arising out of the Convention. Russian lawyers, like M. Volodin, insist that "the prevention and punishment of genocide should remain within the realm of national legislation." It is surely pertinent to ask how the courts of any state could take action against its own government which would probably be the organiser of the genocide? It can scarcely be an individual crime. Whatever the answer the Soviet proviso ensures that no international body will make much progress in investigating the Hungarian deportations.

The most recent exhibition of Soviet indifference to human suffering has occurred in Hungary where the Russians have refused repeated requests that the Red Cross be allowed to enter Budapest to succour the injured. Again, this need cause no surprise as M. Nikolayev in an article in a Soviet legal journal in 1953 wrote: "the International Committee of the Red Cross is a closed group intimately connected with foreign and particularly American capital. . . . the International Committee of the Red Cross is not in any sense an international organisation in spite of its name." This type of criticism is directed against

all the organisations of the Red Cross—the League of Red Cross Societies, the Red Cross Conferences and the Permanent Red Cross Commission, and the writer ends by alleging that “no genuine democrat will believe any more in hypocritical assurances of Red Cross neutrality and impartiality.” Clearly, therefore, the Soviet Union has been acting in accordance with the tenets of Soviet Law in its activities in Eastern Europe and the attitude of the Soviet Union to international law is merely another manifestation of the Communist approach to law in general as evidenced by the writings of Soviet jurists. Law is an instrument of political ideology.

BREATHING MARBLE¹

By

D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

NULLUM TETIGIT QUOD NON ORNAVIT—to what man of letters in modern times can Dr. Johnson's lapidary tribute be more justly adapted than to the subject of this book, and with greater reason? Mr. Speaight's long-awaited portrait exhibits a more virile and versatile genius than Goldsmith, with a vastly wider sweep of culture and no babyish tricks to lessen his stature. That recognition all too rarely accorded Belloc in his lifetime—*et pour cause*, as Parisian columnists say—cannot be withheld by any reader of these 500 absorbing pages not afflicted with an all-too-familiar species of myopia.

The missing Boswell for whom the lament among Belloc's younger friends long since assumed liturgical form, with versicle and response, has at length arrived. One invokes an illustrious exemplar advisedly. Like Boswell, Mr. Speaight encountered his massive subject late in his career (Johnson 54, Belloc 68), and enjoyed intimate contact almost as long; eleven years as against Boswell's fifteen. Like Boswell also Mr. Speaight has effectively pursued and recovered time past, and the mainspring

¹The *Life of Hilaire Belloc*, by Robert Speaight (Hollis and Carter 30s).

of his achievement is equally a love neither blind nor shy to recognise what the Doctor would call the anfractuosités of a great man's temperament. Of these Belloc like Johnson had his full share, though he was "supernaturally good." They are neither glossed over nor minimised in these pages. So far as discerning admiration, a keen eye, intensive research and a command of English befitting its subject can do it, the total Belloc is here recaptured. Rhetorically speaking, a magnificent torso has regained its limbs and become "breathing marble," or rather flesh-and-blood vibrant and vocal. I think Mr. Speaight well entitled to adorn his title page in future editions with Boswell's own prefatory tag:

*Quo fit ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita senis.*

No glossy Academy offering, therefore. Most of Belloc's quirks are here, explicable and other. His loves, as summarised by Mr. Speaight, included Burgundy, sunshine, tobacco, music (though not all music, and only Mozart among the classics), Rabelais (also Milton, Dryden, Johnson, Gibbon, and P. G. Wodehouse), good verse, non-typical Frenchmen, beggars, Irishmen, gas lamps, pretty stories, Gothic architecture, similes, and all good fellowship. He was strongly allergic on the other hand to smart rich women, the pianoforte, dons, the drama, whisky—once dismissed, oddly, in my hearing as "post-Reformation filth"—the Baroque, marine engines, Chesterton's more reckless prose-acrobatics, El Greco ("a repulsive lunatic"), Dreyfusards of every hue, "sprung" verse, poster-scenery, lobsters, and "Old English" Catholics, for each of which and whom there is probably a case. A future appendix of Bellociana might include more of the ritual Continental-travel observances: the affixing of the Légion rosette before landing in France ("it awes the poor, subdues the rich, mollifies the Republic, disarms its hirelings, and ensures reasonable progress and virtue rewarded"); the rite of the *Indicateur Chaix* and the Scheduled Day; the opening skirmish with the French telephone-service; the nightly wooing of "my sister Sleep" with hermetically sealed windows and tight-drawn curtains, and so many more. All such endearing rites are significant. Man is sanely nourished, body and soul, as

Belloc points out in his essay on the Christmas and New Year observances at King's Land, by "a multiplicity of observed traditional things." One could not expect Mr. Speaight to recall every one of those peculiar to Belloc. Enough of a many-faceted *haecceitas*, grave and gay, is displayed in these pages to present the complete man, and one can be grateful. His humility above all is too little known.

By the full recovery of the missing years of childhood and adolescence, and the vigorous fighting years above all, Mr. Speaight has done the State some service. Belloc's entry on the public stage in the 1890's coincides almost exactly, I find, with that of Rostand's *Cyrano*, with which indomitable swordsman ("Que je pactise?—*Jamais! Jamais!*") he has so many superficial resemblances that a man of the theatre like Mr. Speaight might, one would think, have noted a few in passing. On the other hand a hundred surprises await those who knew Belloc only in the last quarter-century of his life. The Oratory schooldays under "Jack" Newman, for example; that single frustrated term at the Collège Stanislas; the whole story of the French Army interlude; the influence of Oxford's dissolvent air—there was no chaplaincy as yet—on the faith of even a Belloc. This acted so strongly, *pro tem.*, that by the end of the Balliol period Mr. Speaight judges that he had moved a long way from the piety of his boyhood.

Belloc would never have dreamed at any time of denying that he was a Catholic; he belonged with every fibre of his being to the Catholic tradition of Europe. But his temperament, though it was ardent and romantic, was also sceptical. The men he mixed with at Balliol had only the vaguest religious convictions; a cloudy and conceited agnosticism was in the air. He was at the age when faith wears thin and the world is too much with one. . . . He did not yet realise how good a thing it would be "not to have to return to the Faith."

The quotation is from *The Path to Rome*, as many will recognise; it ends that moving meditation on "the nature of Belief" after Vespers at Undervelier. By this time the happiest of marriages had restored Belloc to the Faith, fully and for life. "I tell you it is like home," he wrote to J. S. Phillimore in 1896, a year after marrying Elodie Hogan. "My soul had frozen—a little more and I should have done nothing with my life."

Mr. Speaight rightly attributes the return, under God, to Mrs. Belloc. During his arduous five-year courtship and separation Belloc

had grown, not away from her, but away from many of the things in which she believed; things which had intimately formed her and could never be divorced from her personality. Chief among them was the Faith. The dazzling prestige of Oxford, the laughter, the carousals, the physical energy, the cutting intellectual debate—all seemed an expense of spirit and a waste of breath besides the reality of the things he had recovered.

And he did not forget his debt. From the shock of her loss in 1914 he never recovered. Writing just after her death to Phillimore, he implored his prayers. "I am in peril of my intelligence and perhaps of my conduct and therefore of my soul. . . ." All the years afterwards (" . . . and a Mass for Elodie"—how regularly was this his final preoccupation on quitting some church abroad, even if it entailed nearly missing a train by having to pursue some elusive Abbé halfway round Notre-Dame in semi-darkness) he was mourning her still.

After 1895 that native scepticism Belloc owed to his half-French blood, like his hard-edged intellect and his ruthlessness in combat, fell back into its proper place, with the Faith in supreme command. What his religion, deep and unemotional, meant to him henceforth a goggling audience of Liberals in South Salford was to learn that night in 1905 when Belloc made his opening speech as their candidate. Mr. Speaight conveys the scene divertingly.

The clergy had warned him that the religious question was going to be very tricky for him and that he had better say nothing about it. He proudly disregarded their advice. He rose to address the packed audience and spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen, I am a Catholic. As far as possible I go to Mass every day. This [taking a rosary from his pocket] is a rosary. As far as possible, I kneel down and tell these beads every day. If you reject me on account of my religion, I shall thank God that He has spared me the indignity of being your representative."

A hush of astonishment was followed by a thunderclap of applause, and they duly elected him. All through his brief and militant Parliamentary career he was equally disconcerting when

the occasion warranted; for example when speaking on Birrell's Education Bill or the Irish Question. It never occurred to him, as it certainly did to his hearers, that openly to proclaim a religion is bad form; there were *bienpensants* of his own Faith as hotly embarrassed as anybody. Add to this the vigour of a Radical democrat asserting that the first duty of an intelligent man is to change social conditions so that "the rich of England shall be made less rich and the poor shall be made less poor," and one may realise how uncomfortable Belloc made his presence for a bland frock-coated Commons of 1906-9, and the Liberal Party above all. He sickened of the Parliamentary game and threw it up sooner than other men of integrity have done, but he made close friends in Parliament as he did everywhere else. It was not every man in Edwardian England who could prevail on an aristocrat like George Wyndham to travel third-class in French trains.

All the combative years, the years of creative literary and political energy, with their bewildering variety of writing-feats, are filled with a restlessness and a sad anxiety, underlying the continual merriment, to which Mr. Speaight accords its proper dimension. Belloc's whole life, with its bereavements and disappointments, was a battle, not merely for the Faith and all good things but for bare existence; he was a driven man, with a family to support and a rigid and extensive Press boycott operating against him for the best part of his active life. Not till his eightieth birthday, when he had ceased to care, did Fleet Street make a combined *volte-face* and salute him as a master; not till he was dead was the epithet "great" applied to him by the newspapers. Of the Catholic minority for which he fought he had in depressed moments a low opinion, not undeserved. Thus to Mrs. Reginald Balfour in 1933:

All efforts to sow any seed of the Faith in England are necessarily heroically hard, and nine out of ten must fail. This is not mainly due to the hostility of the national spirit but to its increasing lethargy, *which has especially affected the Catholic body*. . . . The Catholic converts are the most intelligent and strong of the English. They are very few, but they are each of them an *élite*. But they are not appreciated by the woeful mass of old Catholicism. *C'est à pleurer*.

Exasperation with the "old Catholics'" attitude to Ireland and the Dreyfus case, on which business his stand remained

doggedly unaffected by the verdict of ninety per cent of the civilised world, and their "conviction that the Catholic culture is inferior" led him in fact into exaggerations he himself admitted. A sombre remark about singing hymns of praise to the Protestant majority for the privilege of being allowed to exist had something in it, perhaps, and still has. Which leads directly to *Europe and the Faith*, a landmark (1920) to which Mr. Speaight devotes close and illuminating attention. That Belloc in this book over-stresses the European aspect of a universal thing was a contemporary charge he strongly denied in a letter to the Catholic Press. "I have never said that the Church was necessarily European. The Church will last for ever, and . . . our remote descendants may find its chief membership to have passed to Africans or Asiatics. What I have said is that the European thing is essentially a Catholic thing, and that European values would disappear with the disappearance of Catholicism." If the general impression remained otherwise, it was not Belloc's fault, and one might query whether "he did not even want to imagine what Catholicism would be like when it had been preached to all peoples." The summing-up of this splendid book is fair enough:

His vision was a noble one, and true within its limits. But there was more to Catholicism than that.

There was, and is, yet on every page there is the *griffe du maître*, and if Belloc knocked the insular head too hard, this may be—who knows?—more useful at times than patting it in the kindly Chestertonian manner.

His close friends, as everybody knows, included Catholics, Protestants, and agnostics of all shapes and sizes, but with avowed public enemies of the Faith he took the stand of (unless I err) St. Polycarp with Marcion and his like, refusing to exchange with such men the false becks and smiles our social conventions demand. When Marcion happened to be a touchy fellow-member of the Reform Club this might lead to a painful scene, and on one occasion in fact did. Chesterton's relations with Wells, a very friendly man, were impossible to Belloc; though after his magistral drubbing of *An Outline of History*—doubtless not one in 500,000 readers of Wells has ever heard of Belloc's exposure—it is not easy to imagine two such men ever meeting again on ordinary terms. Otherwise Belloc's array of friends,

as they step in and out of Mr. Speaight's pages, is astonishing in its variety. Few men can ever have commanded the love of so many fellow-creatures having nothing else in common. I think Mr. Speaight might incidentally have recorded the regal compliment Belloc invariably paid his younger friends, those of the generation of his sons, by treating them as his intellectual equals. It is one more mark of greatness.

There is practically everything in this long, rich book one could have wished for; love, candour, wit, understanding, modesty, and good, flexible, shapely prose. The effort involved both in research and writing must have been tremendous, but one is never made aware of it. I would personally have welcomed a slightly more intensive study of Belloc the poet; at the same time congratulating Mr. Speaight on the recovery of a little flawless gem which Ronsard himself might have signed—the lyric addressed to Lady Diana Cooper beginning:

Diane chasseresse

Déesse enchanteresse

Et secourable encor . . .

Those majestic last twenty-two lines of the *Heriote Poem in Praise of Wine* might have been included, being the essential Belloc at his highest; they shook one at first hearing, they shake one still. But as Mr. Speaight explains in his preface, this is a biography, not an anthology. It is certainly a tribute to Belloc of the finest kind, recalling those combined memorial-feats which the Renaissance called a *tombeau*, and a fitting successor to Mr. J. B. Morton's inspired memoir. Among the illustrations I commend the photograph of Belloc in Rome in 1901, after the famous walk, the impressive camera-study of his late middle age by Mr. J. J. Hall, which also adorns the jacket, and of course the Gunn full-length portrait of 1939. Mgr. Knox's panegyric at Westminster supplies the final perfect cadences of a memorable symphony.

The annual subscription to THE MONTH is 32s. 6d. Obtainable through any bookseller or direct from 114 Mount Street, London, W.1.

ST. BENEDICT JOSEPH LABRE

By

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

ST. BENEDICT JOSEPH LABRE is not so popular that a general knowledge of his life can be taken for granted or so *simpatico* that the choice of him as a "favourite" saint might be assumed. At the outset, therefore, it may be permissible simply to state that the choice has been dictated by the belief that he was, in a unique way, a significant figure both for his own eighteenth century and for ours; and to quote the epitome of his life from *The Book of Saints*: "He came of a family of shopkeepers in easy circumstances and was educated by an uncle, a priest. He tried without success to join the Trappists. Then he found his vocation as a pilgrim-beggar, tramping from shrine to shrine throughout Europe, living on alms and spending long hours before the Blessed Sacrament. He died in Rome during Holy Week."

He was born in 1748, eight years before Mozart who, like him, died at the age of thirty-five. The saint and the genius were thus contemporaries whose work was done within an equal span of years and whose juxtaposition is itself revealing. In Vienna, Mozart was writing complainingly that the summer "is the worst season for anyone who wants to make money: the most distinguished families are all in the country and all I can do is to work hard in preparation for the winter"—that winter when, in the February of 1782, Pope Pius VI was to visit Vienna to try to influence the Emperor, Joseph II, who was emulating King Henry VIII of England in his attack on the Church and his suppression and pillage of the Religious Orders.

When Pius VI left Rome on that journey to Vienna, Benedict Labre was living among the dregs of the Roman populace in the Colosseum, by choice the poorest of the beggars there, making expiation for the age, reciting his night office by the light of a

candle-end in one of the ruined grottoes before standing in the empty arena, his arms outstretched in the form of a cross, in an intensity of prayer.

At the end of Lent, 1783, Mozart was able to report the success of his concert and the Emperor Joseph's patronage of him:

The theatre could not have been more crowded and every box was full. But what pleased me most of all was that His Majesty, the Emperor, was present and goodness! how delighted he was and how he applauded me! It is his custom to send money to the box-office *before* going to the theatre; otherwise I should have been fully justified in counting on a larger sum. He sent twenty-five ducats.

In Rome, on the Wednesday of that year's Holy Week, Benedict, though quite obviously dying, insisted on going to Mass in S. Maria dei Monti near the Colosseum. He managed, by a tremendous effort, to stand through the long Gospel, but collapsed on the steps outside the church and died that evening. Almost immediately the streets were thronged by people acclaiming "il santo"; throughout Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, it seemed that the whole of Rome had come to honour his body; and in the first three months after his death he worked 136 attested miracles. By 1784, news of him and the posthumous cures he had wrought were circulating in the London newspapers and the following year an English life of him was published, which gave the members of Boodle's and White's an alternative topic of conversation to the inconvenience caused to "Prinny" by his £160,000-worth of debts or Lord Barrymore's pleasant jest in dressing Tom Hooper the pugilist as a clergyman to make wild parties even wilder.

Benedict Labre thus seemed the most eccentric of exceptions in that eighteenth century "whose glory it was"—the words are Henri Ghéon's—"to have lost faith, hope and charity." But today, in our age, which may be described as the end of the epilogue to the eighteenth century, the saint has acquired a new and surprising significance. The contemporary rootlessness and despair has resulted in the "tramp" becoming the symbolic, even the archetypal, figure. In the modern literature of our own country, it is still politely rather the tramp at heart than the tramp in actuality; but in America where the process has gone further and the insight is keener, the "bum" has come into his own. In Algren's latest novel, for example, his "bum" hero soliloquises:

I feel like I been everywhere God got land . . . yet all I found was people with hard ways to go. All I found was troubles 'n degradation. All I found was that those with the hardest ways of all to go were quicker to help others than those with the easiest ways. All I found was two kinds of people. Them that would rather live on the loser's side of the street with the other losers than to win off by themselves, and them who want to be one of the winners even though the only way left for them to win was over them who have already been whipped.

Here the contracting-out which is the only protest left to the good is on the natural level only; it is not, like Labre's, on the supernatural and for the love of God. Yet there is in it an echo of Labre's voice speaking across the continents and the centuries.

But, to me, the story of Labre has an even deeper historical meaning. In 1770, on his way to Rome, he called by chance at a house in Dardilly where he was given a bowl of soup and shelter for the night. It was the house of Pierre Vianney and among his host's children whom he blessed on leaving was Mathieu who, sixteen years later, was to become the father of the future Curé d'Ars. Benedict is said to have written a letter of thanks to the Vianneys, which the Curé kept in his possession. Whether or not there was this tangible link between them, Benedict Labre and the Curé are indeed "two spiritual brothers, separated in time by the fall of the old régime, two humiliated figures standing as a frame to the Revolution."

They are more than that. History, it has been truly said, is not a record of things that have happened but an evaluation of significant events. But still this leaves undefined the criterion of "significance" and the standard of "value." Without at this point advancing a lengthy argument, a Catholic may be permitted to hold that "history" is essentially the story of the dealings of God with men. The Old Testament is significant, and therefore *history*, in a sense in which Herodotus is not. In such history, the term of value is definite enough. The Chosen People in the Old Testament are not only under judgment: they also judge. Foreign nations and people are "good" in so far as they aid the work of God by safeguarding the Covenant or recalling the Covenant-nation to a sense of its purpose and responsibilities. To take one obvious example, the battle of Salamis merely occurs "off-stage" in the second chapter of the book of Esther and for

the importance of Xerxes (Assuerus) in the scheme of things, the hanging of Aman is more relevant than the whipping of the Hellespont.

When, after the Incarnation, the Catholic Church replaced the Chosen Race as the heir to the Promises, it became, too, the touchstone of history and the old Chroniclers who made their value-judgments depend on men's attitude to it are nearer the truth than their modern, "impartial" successors. But the contracting-party of the New Covenant no less than that of the Old is under judgment. The Church, too, at times has compromised with and become corrupted by the world; and to see the conflict as a simple antithesis between right and wrong is neither good history nor good theology. Yet the Church, merely because it belongs to the New Covenant, possesses within itself an absolute standard which the Old lacked—the Saints. It is by reference to the saints that we come to certainty and a history of Europe written in terms of the saints would be a true—perhaps the only true—history of Europe. They imply judgment and dictate perspective.

So it is that the whole of French history from the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century can be comprehended in and evaluated by the lives of two men—St. Benedict Joseph Labre and the Curé d'Ars. Between the visit of Benedict to Dardilly and the death of the Curé, France experienced everything from the reign of Madame Dubarry, the ferment of the Revolution, the "Enlightenment" of the Encyclopaedists and the flurry of Napoleon to the novels of George Sand, the Communist uprising in Paris, the Crimean War and the beginning of the Suez Canal. And, among it all, Labre made himself a beggar, poorer than the poorest *sansculotte*, and the Curé (dying in the year that Darwin published the *Origin of Species*) stayed for fifty years in the smallest parish in France and brought the world to it on its knees.

In conventional, secular history, the French Revolution, with its causes and its results, dominates the age and we still live under its shadow. But before it happened Benedict Labre judged it. In simple fact, he foresaw what he was not to live to see. The dream which persistently troubled him to the extent of making him think it was some mirage sent by the devil was of "a huge fire driving across my country." In the blaze, abbeys were burnt;

the Blessed Sacrament was profaned on the altars; priests were persecuted. That he realised with exactitude what it was is improbable (though the spirit which informed it, when it came, recognised him for what he was, and two women were sent to the guillotine for possessing relics of him); but by his life he corrected its false assumptions.

"Expiation," Voltaire was explaining in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique* is "a wild and absurd notion." Labre spent a life of expiation; and to those who wondered at the intensity of it, he would say: "With God's help you can do anything, anything at all; you can even stand in the fire and not get burnt, like the three young men in the Babylonian furnace." To the false notion of "liberty," he opposed the true concept of obedience. There was a moment in his own life when obedience seemed to deny his most profound perceptions and he was ordered to receive the Sacrament to show that he was not a secret Jansenist. No act of obedience could have been more difficult for him. "I am a sinful man," he said, "I am not worthy to receive the Bread of Angels." But he did as his confessor told him, explaining: "It is better to go to Communion out of obedience than to stay away out of humility."

In what is called "the Age of Reason" but which was rather the age of that rationalism which is the antithesis of reason (in that, while asserting the rights of reason over nature it denied the rights of super-nature over reason), Benedict almost made a cult of what was deemed the superstitious. His pilgrimages were to what the age considered the more suspect of relics—to the Holy Shroud, to the incorrupt body of St. Claude, above all to the Holy House which had been carried by angels from Nazareth to Loreto. Kneeling there, he never doubted that this was the very room where, by the power of the Holy Ghost, Our Lady had conceived the Son. And his faith and devotions so clarified his intellectual perceptions that he understood, as few have, that greatest of mysteries, the Holy Trinity. When he spoke of the Godhead, his confessors thought they were listening to a prophet. One, hearing him speak of the Trinity in the most profound and at the same time theologically exact terms, asked him if he read St. Teresa, Benedict managed to stammer out: "I'm not an educated man, Father."

In dealing with the poverty of the age, he answered its evil and

drew the sting of its envy, by immersing himself in its very depths and, for nothing but the love of God, drawing upon himself all its suffering and humiliation and distortion. Lazarus, whose sores the dogs licked, was bright with the promise of redemption. As one of Benedict's biographers has put it: "When Benedict spoke of poverty it no longer meant the absence of something good: it became a possession itself to be defended." But Benedict himself did more than teach: "We must trust ourselves utterly to God's goodness and wait with hope and resignation for whatever life may bring"; he acted on it, refusing a few pence offered to him as he set off for one of the shrines with "the poor don't carry money on their journeys" and rejecting a gift of food with "the poor have scraps of bread, not whole loaves . . . they must mortify themselves and overcome their flesh just like everyone else." Alone, this might have seemed a fanaticism which would justify the suspicion of Jansenism or even more heretical asceticism. Even set against the background of his age, Benedict's stringency might seem excessive were it not for the balancing part of the picture, of which the strange happening of Maundy Thursday, 1773, may be taken as an example.

Benedict was at Moulins, living temporarily in an attic which the Franciscans had found for him. On that Maundy Thursday, when the Church, imitating the humility of Christ, was giving officially to the poor, Benedict, too, felt that he must give something. He went to the town and collected twelve other beggars who might be pardoned for their ribald jests at the suggestion that the most ragged of them all could give them anything. For a joke more than anything else, they followed him to his attic where he had for them a few pennyworth of peas and some crusts. "They held out their bowls derisively; and he held up his as if his few scraps were to be consecrated. And suddenly they fell silent, for he became absolutely transfigured; under his glowing fingers, the tiny pittance grew—the bowls they held were filled to the brim." Somebody whispered the word "miracle," but Benedict merely smiled and "murmured something about a generous patron who gave him everything he wanted."

Thus Benedict spoke to his age, opposing his expiation to its materialism, his obedience to its drive towards anarchy, his simplicity of faith to its sterile rationalism. But he spoke for the most part in silence. Even in this, he stood apart. In all that

eighteenth-century welter of epigram and argument, he remained a Trappist who had, against his own will, been forced into the world and who lived by the Rule of the Order he had chosen in his youth, but which had not been able to receive him.

Benedict was born at Amettes, near Boulogne, the eldest of fifteen children. Even in childhood, though of a happy disposition, he showed an inclination to austerity. He preferred giving things away to getting them and practising how much he could do without. In the coldest weather, his mother noticed, he would sit far from the fire. He liked talking to tramps and beggars, giving them food which he himself should have eaten. Though his masters at school said he was a most intelligent pupil, his real interest was only in religious instruction. When he was twelve he went to live with his uncle, the parish priest of Erin, not far from his home, who completed his education and fostered the vocation which Benedict seemed undoubtedly to have, training him as his successor. At sixteen the boy wished to enter La Trappe. His uncle, thinking him neither strong nor old enough for such austerity, tried to dissuade him, pointing out that his duty seemed to lie there in the parish which would one day be in his spiritual charge. He even reproached Benedict for ingratitude to receive the reply: "I did not want to hurt you: I fought it as long as I could." The Abbé Labre then insisted that Benedict returned to his parents to gain their approval, but they told him he was to wait till he was older and sent him back to his uncle.

In the summer of 1766, the town was struck by the plague and the Abbé was one of the victims. The way to La Trappe at last seemed open. Benedict's parents withdrew their opposition to his becoming a religious, fearing they might be opposing the will of God; but his maternal uncle, who also was a priest, suggested that he should ask admission to a Carthusian rather than a Trappist house. He set off for the Chartreuse du Val de Sainte-Aldegonde and was refused. With another uncle—Benedict had six priest uncles—he then went to another house of the Order at Neuville-sous-Montreuil. Here he was told that as he was not yet twenty there was no hurry and that he was not sufficiently versed in dialectic and plainsong. He put himself under a new tutor to study them and, armed with a certificate stating that he was "a good-living boy of well-ordered and edifying behaviour,

with a meek and docile character, who goes often to the sacraments, loves study and finds pleasure only in being apart from the world," returned to Neuville, this time to be admitted. But, in a few weeks he was back in Amettes, informing his parents in his matter-of-fact way; "God does not want me to be a Carthusian but a Trappist." He set out for La Trappe at last, at the end of 1767, with his parents' blessing, but the Abbot, considering him too delicate for so rigorous a life, told him to wait a few years, entertained him "as the most transient of visitors" and sent him home again. For a year he seemed to settle down on the farm which he one day, as the eldest, would inherit; but the call of his curious vocation was too strong. In spite of his parents' entreaties, of his village's anger, of his parish priest's reproaches, this delicate young man whose determination to enter a monastery was equalled only by the monasteries' determination to keep him out, announced once more his intention to go back to La Trappe; but since the opposition was so general he went first to make a retreat and ask the advice of the Bishop.

The Bishop, who knew his family, asked whether they approved of his becoming a Trappist. Benedict said that they would rather he became a Carthusian. "In that case, my son," said the Bishop, unaware of the previous experiences at Neuville, obey your parents. Become a Carthusian." Obediently, Benedict set off for Neuville the third time on 16 August, 1769. In October, he wrote a letter home saying:

My dearest Father and Mother, This is to tell you that the Carthusians find me unsuited to their life and that I left them on the second of October. I look on this as a command from God calling me to something more perfect still—they said themselves that it was the hand of God taking me from them. I am therefore setting out for La Trappe, where I have always longed to go. I ask your forgiveness for all my disobedience and for all the sorrow I have caused you. I ask both of you to give me your blessing so that Our Lord will be with me. I shall pray for you every day of my life; please do not worry about me. I wanted to stay here, but they would not have me. So I am glad to be able to feel quite sure that God Almighty is leading me. . . . I will have the fear of Him always before me and the love of Him in my heart. I have every hope of being received at La Trappe; if not, I am told that Sept-Fonts is not quite so harsh and they take people younger; but I shall certainly be received at La Trappe. . . .

But once again La Trappe refused him. It was pointed out to him that he had, on his first visit, been told to wait several years. He had come back much too soon. So he went to the Cistercian abbey of Sept-Fonts where at last he had his wish and on 11 November put on the habit of a novice as Brother Urban. But, five months later, he fell seriously ill; the Abbot told him when he was out of danger, "My son, God is not calling you to our Order," and when he was strong enough at the beginning of July 1770, Benedict left to journey to Rome. But it is worth recording that the infirmarian at Sept-Fonts, who, perhaps, knew him best, gave it as his opinion: "This young man is a saint." From Piedmont, that August, he wrote again to his parents—the second of the only two letters of his that are known:

You know that I left the Abbey of Sept-Fonts and you must be worried about what I have done since then and what sort of life I want to take up. I am writing this to do my duty and relieve you of your worries. I must then tell you that I left Sept-Fonts on 2 July; I still had a fever when I came away, but it had gone by the fourth day; and I set out towards Rome. I am now half-way there; I have not got very far since leaving Sept-Fonts because all through August it has been terribly hot in Piedmont, where I am; and also I was kept for three weeks, just lately, by a slight illness I had, in a hospital where I was very well looked after. Apart from that I have been very well since I left Sept-Fonts. There are several monasteries in Italy where the life is very regular and very austere. I intend to enter one of these and hope God will allow me to. I have even heard of one Trappist monastery whose Abbot wrote to a French Abbot saying he would receive any Frenchman who came, because he is so short of subjects. At Sept-Fonts they gave me good references. Do not worry about me. . . . Please give me your blessings so that God will bless my plans. It was His Providence that directed me to undertake this journey. . . .

Benedict was twenty-two-and-a-half years old when, on the final rejection, he set out on the unceasing pilgrimage over Europe from shrine to shrine which was to be so mysteriously his true vocation.

The importance of these early events is that they show without any possibility of doubt that the last thing that he himself wished was to be an eccentric tramp. No one could have tried more fiercely, against all odds, to withdraw into a hidden anonymity of silence and suffering. Even his own purpose, as he saw it, was

not quite that for which God used him. The last person to have known what he in fact was to his age was himself. He did not even become a pilgrim because he could not become a monk; it was because he wanted to retain the integrity of a monk in surroundings which were not designed to help it that he went from shrine to shrine and made Europe his La Trappe. "Labre is the great patron for all who are trying to find out what they are meant to do," Agnes de la Gorce has so perceptively said in her life of him: "for he spent his life trying to find that out for himself. It may be that only in the peace of the very end did he realise that he really had found it."

He set out on his long pilgrimage clad in an old coat, with a large rosary round his neck and a small one in his hand and on his back a sack which had in it a New Testament, a breviary—he said the Divine Office daily—and his favourite book, *The Imitation of Christ*. He took nothing else. He never begged though he accepted any alms that were given him and dispensed to other tramps what was left after his small needs were satisfied. In summer he slept in the open, though in winter he would accept a bed if anyone offered it to him.

We have a description of him at the beginning of his twelve-and-a-half years of journeyings, from some who met him in Fabriano where he had gone to venerate the shrine of St. Romuald. He had a small, fair beard and rather long hair falling over his shoulders "like a Nazerene." He spoke with great courtesy, had scrupulously good manners, ate with careful cleanliness—"not like a common beggar at all"—and gave no appearance of exhaustion. The sisters who preserved this memory of him preserved also his saying: "To love God, you need three hearts in one—a heart of fire for Him, a heart of flesh for your neighbour, and a heart of bronze for yourself."

We have, too, a description of him near the end of his journey, from Fr. Marconi who became his confessor:

In the month of June, 1782, just after I had celebrated Mass. . . . I noticed a man close beside me whose appearance at first sight was decidedly unpleasant and forbidding. His legs were only partially covered, his clothes were tied round his waist with an old cord. His hair was uncombed, he was ill-clad and wrapped about in an old and ragged coat. In outward appearance he seemed the most miserable beggar I had ever seen.

Between the two there exists a picture of Labre painted under strange circumstances by André Bley. As this somewhat obscure artist from Lyons was making a sketch, in 1777 in Rome, for a picture of the call of St. Peter, he noticed, among a crowd of mendicants "a young man in beggar's garb with a short red beard" who, though not handsome, had a peculiar beauty which made the artist approach him to ask him to come to his studio and pose as the model for Christ. Benedict shuddered, shook his head and went on saying his rosary. Bley asked again. Benedict, this time, gave his decided negative in French. Then Bley tried the third time, representing it as a kindness to a fellow-countryman, and Benedict, who taught that charity to one's neighbour should outweigh everything else, followed the painter to his studio. "He came," wrote Bley to his brother in Paris, "posed like a statue and refused any kind of sitter's fee." From this sketch, after Benedict's death, a portrait was made—a strong, peasant face with emaciated cheeks and downcast eyes. Two years later, another and better painter, Cavalucci, came upon Benedict praying and "with the eye of a genius made him the incarnation of mysticism."

In Rome at the time of Benedict's death was a twenty-eight-year-old American Congregational minister, John Thayer, trying to understand Catholicism "just as I should have wished," as he wrote, "to understand the religion of Mohammed if I had been in Constantinople." He spoke of the strange, by now verminous, beggar in terms which even his friends considered unnecessarily tasteless. His detestation of Catholicism reached its peak when the Roman crowds insisted on making a popular canonisation of this unpleasant eccentric—when the guard of police on duty outside the church where Benedict's body lay had to be doubled and Corsican soldiers had to be brought in to beat back the superstitious crowds. But, fascinated as well as repelled, John Thayer watched events and when the report of miracles started to shake the city, he could not resist investigating the phenomena by calling on some who claimed to have been cured by Benedict's intercession. Six weeks after Benedict's death, John Thayer became a Catholic and, in due course a priest—the first native of New England to be ordained to the priesthood. Even in the nature of his first convert, St. Benedict Joseph Labre revealed his "significance."

THE PRE-CHRISTIAN MONKS OF QUMRAN

By

EDMUND F. SUTCLIFFE

IS IT LEGITIMATE to give the designation of monks to the Essene community who, as Pliny the Elder records, had their dwelling-place at the north-west of the Dead Sea, and the remnants of whose library have recently come to light after lurking for centuries in the surrounding caves? Putting aside varieties of rule and practice, by the name of monks we mean men who are led by the desire of attaining religious perfection to separate themselves from the secular world, and, while living in community under a superior, base their spiritual life on the practice of poverty, chastity and obedience. With this meaning in mind, to answer our question at once in the affirmative without any qualification would be misleading, for the body to which our monks belonged had a long history of at least some two hundred and fifty years. In the course of that time their organisation and manner of life underwent considerable development and in the earlier stages could not be called monastic.

Briefly sketched the outline of their history would seem to be as follows. About the beginning of the second pre-Christian century the hellenisation that was exercising such influence in the Near East appealed so strongly to many Jews that they abandoned the traditions of their fathers, rejected the Law of Moses, and adopted the Greek way of life. As we learn from the first Book of Maccabees, they applied to Antiochus Epiphanes, in whose territory Palestine then lay, and received from him authority to adopt the jurisprudence of the Greeks. They built a gymnasium at Jerusalem according to Greek usage; they set aside the "holy covenant" God had made with their ancestors at Sinai; and "sold themselves to do evil," as Elias had said earlier of Achab. Later this same king, Antiochus Epiphanes, attempted to impose one

law and one religion on all his dominions. The religion of Israel was to be sternly repressed. The sacrifices were to be abolished, the feasts profaned. This religious persecution, on the one hand, caused many to forsake the Law, and, on the other, stimulated the zeal of the earnest Jews and led to the Maccabean wars. Early in the conflict the Maccabees were joined by the party of the Hasidaeans, that is, "the Devout," whose name marks them as devoted to the practice and defence of the Law of Moses. The name of this party disappears from our sources by the end of the Maccabean religious war. And from them seems to have sprung the party of the Essenes. Naturally with the changing circumstances of the time the ideas and policy of the party will have changed also. Just as the Hasidaeans had fought against the armies of Syria, so in the "Two Columns," one of the earliest documents emanating from the Qumran caves, there is a regulation about war for the subjugation of the Gentiles. Later all thought of war was put aside and the Essenes in their labours to earn a livelihood would not even make any instrument for war-like purposes. Similarly, when the high-priesthood was wrested from the lineage of Zadok and usurped by the Hasmonaeans, the party became alienated from the worship of the temple. The unworthy and wicked lives of some of the Hasmonaean high-priests came as an added motive of hatred and all part in the temple sacrifices was finally abandoned. It seems certain that the cleavage was also due to the introduction of a new calendar by the hellenising priesthood, which in the eyes of the party meant that the feasts and sabbaths were not being celebrated on their proper days.

These changes of circumstances and consequent outlook of the party help to illustrate another fundamental development. The original members of the Hasidaean party, both sacerdotal and lay, will have taken wives and founded families according to the almost universal custom of the Jews. And as married men they lived each with his own family. But the persisting lawlessness in high places and the neglect of the Mosaic Law gradually drew them further and further away from the common life of the nation and strengthened their bonds as a distinct and separate party. For years they had groped vaguely without a definite plan or organisation when a powerful and energetic personality arose among them. This man was called in the writings of the sect

"the Teacher of Righteousness" or, as the name can be translated, "the Righteous Teacher," or better "the Authorised Teacher," as he was considered to have received from God the power of interpreting the mysteries of the prophetic writings. He introduced a rule of life and definitely formed the members of the party into a separate sect. It is probable that in his lifetime about the middle of the second century before Christ they began to live in groups with an established community life. Marriage, it will soon have been realised, harmonised ill with this new arrangement and was a definite hindrance to that perfection of common life at which they aimed. The consequent tendency to eschew marriage will have received a further stimulus from the belief apparent in our documents and no doubt stemming from the Teacher of Righteousness himself that the end of all was approaching. And so finally abstention from marriage became the common practice of the sect though one group at least persisted in the old ways.

Some such process of development would explain the evidence of our sources. Josephus, Philo and the elder Pliny, all three living in the first Christian century, state explicitly in their account of the Essenes of that time that they abstained from marriage. Pliny, who was not so well informed, exaggerates to the extent of stating that their numbers had been maintained without natural growth for thousands of centuries ("per saeculorum millia"). This errs both as to the antiquity of the sect and as to the practice of celibacy from its first beginnings. Josephus adds a note to his account saying that one group of Essenes did not practise celibacy on the ground that, if universally adopted, it would quickly spell the end of the human race. But even these Essenes restricted the use of marriage strictly to the purpose of raising offspring. And both Josephus and Philo record the insistence of the Essenes on the importance of continence. The latter says they refrained from seeking pleasure and the former that they avoided pleasures as evil. This shows that the motive force of their celibacy was not merely that marriage is not compatible with community life and that, as both writers state, they entertained a low opinion of women's virtue. When we turn to the Qumran documents we find that there is no mention of women-folk or children in the *Manual of Discipline*. There is no explicit statement that the members are celibate, but the impression

made on the reader is that the sect consists of men only. It is true that W. H. Brownlee in his translation conjecturally introduces women and children in the lacuna of the opening sentence, but this was under the impression that the "Two Columns" were a homogeneous part of the same document. Now that they have been published, it is clear that they reflect an earlier stage of the sect's history. The section on the Two Ways and the Two Spirits mentions among the rewards of those who walk in the ways of truth in the world "abounding peace with length of days and fruitful seed," iv. 7. But this again is not homogeneous with the part that has won for the whole scroll the title of the *Manual of Discipline*. The title is convenient but also misleading, as the scroll is composite, whereas the title suggests a uniform document dealing with a single theme. The section here quoted is a religious dissertation on the forces of good and evil in the world at large and is not restricted in its outlook to the members of the confraternity. Père Barthélemy makes the suggestion that the language quoted is figurative, the words of the old blessings being applied to spiritual procreation; but this is neither obvious nor convincing. His further observation is, however, practically decisive. The brotherhood laid immense stress on ritual purity and were strict observers of the Mosaic Law, which contains various regulations about sexual purity. If the members had been married, then in the catalogue of punishable faults some mention would surely have been included of breaches of these regulations. Finally, there is no hint of recruitment except by the admission of applicants.

At what stage in the history of the order the change to celibacy was made our present knowledge does not enable us to say. It was presumably gradual, spreading as the older members died out. Perhaps it was at first established at the Qumran community centre and then spread gradually to the smaller groups in other districts of Palestine. Then the question arises about the status of applicants for admission. It seems unlikely that they can all have been unmarried. The longing for children to carry on the family name was very strong among the Jews; and the description of a large family of sons and daughters sitting round the table was part of the traditional picture of a life blessed by God. Consequently few abstained from matrimony. So there is an unanswered problem as to the conduct of married applicants.

Perhaps they could enter only on the decease of their wives. No one is likely to suggest that they made divorce an instrument in the cause of a more perfect life. Nor does it seem probable that all candidates would be young men who had not yet entered on the married state. Pliny, who is not a good witness in the matter, suggests that entrants were of mature age, tired of life and washed up on the shores of the coenobitic life by the waves of fortune ("quos vita fessos ad mores eorum fortunae fluctus agitat"). Philo's testimony is similar. He describes the Essenes as "mature men and already tending to old age." If it were possible to fix the date of the *Damascus Document* and of the "Two Columns," we should be in a position at least to say at what period marriage was still customary or tolerated in the sect. For the latter of these not only speaks of the reception of women and children and their instruction in the precepts and regulations but enacts that a man may not marry till he reaches the age of twenty "when he has a knowledge of good and evil." And the former lays down that "if they dwell in settlements in accordance with the usage of the land [which seems to mean, as is done by the people in general] and take wives and beget children, they shall conduct themselves according to the Law." This would seem to imply that if they do not live in scattered settlements but in the community centre, they will not take wives and found families. Later the document lays down rules regarding the powers of a husband or father to annul the oaths of his wife or daughter. There is also a pertinent regulation about ritual purity.

In the vicinity of the community centre at Qumran there is a large cemetery with some thousand graves. Of these about a dozen have been opened and two or three were found to contain the skeletons of women. From this the conclusion has been drawn that marriage was customary among the community there. But this conclusion clearly goes beyond the evidence. At most it might mean that celibacy was not practised in the early days of the settlement there. And even that is not certain. If it should eventually prove to be the fact that very few of all the graves contain female burials, the explanation of their presence might be merely that some women while visiting their relatives had been taken ill and died. As the archaeological evidence indicates that the monastic establishment existed there for the best part of two centuries up to its abandonment about A.D. 70, there

would be nothing strange in some being overtaken there by death.

In the matter of poverty, as in that of chastity, the practice of the sect underwent a development to a perfect form in which personal ownership was entirely excluded. And here again development was to be expected. Poverty in the sense of communal possession of property had been unknown in Israel before the emergence of the sect, unless indeed it was the practice of "the sons of the prophets." By this designation is meant certain groups of disciples who gathered round some of the prophets and lived apparently a community life. See the story of Eliseus in 4 Kings 4: 38. But we read nothing of their renouncing personal possessions. In any case there had long ceased to be prophets or "sons of prophets" in Israel.

Both Philo and Josephus speak with astonishment of the common ownership of property practised by the Essenes. As Philo puts it, no exaggeration is possible in the matter. No one owned anything at all of his own, neither house nor land nor herds nor any other form of property. Their meals were in common. Even their clothes were not private property. At the approach of winter warmer garments were obtained from the common stock and the lighter summer wear returned to it. And the reverse process would take place towards the close of the cold season. Such common use, as distinct from common ownership, was possible because of the loose-fitting cut of their garments. Whatever gain was made by craftsmanship or agricultural pursuits was handed in to the common fund. This was in charge of officials appointed for the purpose. It was their duty to purchase whatever might be required for the use of the community. Out of the common fund, too, were provided all the needs of the aged and the sick. Thus all were treated exactly alike. A man who had been wealthy before entering the community and had contributed his property to the common fund received no preferential treatment but was on the same footing as the man who had nothing to offer the community except his labour. Neither were Superiors allowed any distinction in the matter of clothing or adornment.

So too we read in the *Manual of Discipline* that candidates who wish to join, must dedicate their property as well as their knowledge and their strength so as to establish common life. But

great prudence was exercised and the fusion of a candidate's property with the common fund was allowed only by stages. The postulant remained outside the community and supported himself for a period not specified in the *Manual* but according to Josephus lasting for one year. Thereafter his conduct and behaviour were scrutinised and, if found satisfactory, he was admitted to his first year of noviceship, and lived, though in partial separation, with the community. But his property was to be kept separate and the first-year novice had still to support himself by his wages. The completion of this first year in the community was followed by a second examination of his conduct, his understanding and his observance of the Law. If the verdict was favourable, the novice was admitted to his second year. His property and wages were now entrusted to the official in charge of the finances and entered in writing to his credit; but they were not to be used for the benefit of the community at large. Only at the end of this second year's noviceship, if the community voted in his favour, did the candidate become a full member, and only then was his property fused with that of the brotherhood. One prescription about property requires a comment here. "If one through carelessness destroys property of the community, he must replace it in full; and, if he cannot replace it, he is to be punished for sixty days." How, it may be asked, could a monk, whose property and earnings all belong to the community, be able to make good a financial loss? It might be supposed that this regulation applies only to those who had not yet become professed members of the community. But there is no hint of any restriction in the regulation; and the meaning is probably that the offender is to work harder or longer hours and so earn more in order to make good the damage done. A damaged text of the *Manual* has been plausibly reconstructed to mean that any member who apostatises from the community after ten years shall not be allowed to recover the property he pooled with the common fund. There is, however, an apparent contradiction between this interpretation and a later passage of the *Manual* where it is prescribed that any member wilfully transgressing the Law of Moses is to be expelled never to return, and no member of the community is to have anything to do with his property. This seems to imply that on expulsion a member is to receive his property back, for it can hardly refer to property

acquired after expulsion, as the expelled member would not be expected to want to contribute to the funds of the body which had dismissed him. It may be explained, however, as an earlier regulation later superseded, as the *Manual* is certainly a composite document, or perhaps as two regulations not accurately harmonised.

The *Damascus Document*, which, as mentioned above, allows marriage to those living in scattered settlements, has consistently a much less stringent regulation as to property. There it is laid down only that each is to contribute the earnings of two days in every month for the support of the poor, the aged, and others in need.

So far we have dealt with poverty only under the aspect of the renunciation of personal, private ownership. The other aspect of poverty, not necessarily combined with the first, is the voluntary abstention from the pleasures and luxuries that wealth can provide and the choice of a frugal mode of life. This attitude springs from a recognition of the fact that, though wealth is not in itself evil, it nevertheless tends to ensnare the heart of man and to lead him into evil ways. Thus the *Damascus Document* speaks of the three nets of Belial, the spirit of wickedness, of which the second is wealth. Later it speaks of the unclean wealth of wickedness. The *Manual* manifests a spirit of detachment when it speaks of the wisdom in these evil times of abandoning to the Men of the Pit wealth and the fruit of manual toil. The same spirit appears in the Hymn of Praise at the end of that scroll where those who covet wealth are classed with the speakers of iniquity and other perverse men. One passage might be misunderstood to be inspired by an appreciation of luxuries. This occurs in the same hymn where among the many times the writer declares his purpose to praise God he mentions "before I lift my hand to enjoy the delicate produce of the world." But this is only a poetic way of expressing his gratitude to God for His gifts and at the same time extolling the excellence of the provision He has made.

As virtues of the Essenes both Philo and Josephus stress their freedom from love of money and of pleasure. They did not hoard gold and silver nor seek to acquire large estates for the sake of their revenues, so that not even as a corporate body were they anxious to own real wealth. They wore their shoes and clothing till completely worn out. The frugality of their meals is mentioned.

They were satisfied with two a day, the midday and the evening repast. For the former Josephus says they had each a loaf of bread laid out by the baker and one dish each brought round by the cook. In keeping with this attitude to life they lived laborious days, going out to work at sunrise and assembling again at eleven for their first repast. After this they again went off to their respective tasks till sunset. But with all their industry they wanted nothing but the necessities of life. Of such men it is not surprising to read that they despised troubles and calamities and overcame pain by will-power and courage.

The remaining element of customary religious profession is obedience. On this matter too there are various prescriptions. The *Damascus Document* forbids anyone to undertake any business in the way of buying and selling without previous application to the local Superior. And anything anyone has to say about a controversy or a decision he must say to the Superior. According to the "Two Columns" those who join the community undertake to conduct themselves according to the decision of the priests, the sons of Sadok, and the men of their covenant. Then there is mention of certain functions to be carried out in obedience to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and of the leading men of the congregation. The *Manual* speaks of the obedience due from each to his fellow, from the inferior to the superior. The same expression occurs again a little later. The inferior is to obey the superior in matters of work and money. The meaning of this expression becomes clear in the list of penalties laid down for various misdemeanours. One such is to disregard the order of an associate who is enrolled before one, that is, not in time but in order of precedence. Every member had his definite assigned rank, liable, if necessary, to revision. As the system would be completely unworkable if every senior could give orders to every junior, this obedience of the small to the great (for that is the literal translation of the words) must have applied only to cases where two or more were assigned to the same piece of work. The direction of the party would then devolve apparently on the senior in rank. The submission of the juniors is mentioned also by Josephus. The Essenes, he says, place a high value on obedience to the elders and the will of the majority. Thus in a formal assembly of at least ten (the smallest number for a legally constituted meeting) no one would speak without the assent of the

other nine. He also tells us that they undertook nothing without the direction of the Superiors. In two regards only they enjoyed complete liberty—in the practical exercise of pity and in giving succour to those in need. They were free to help worthy applicants and to provide food for those in want. But gifts to relatives—and this is noteworthy—were not allowed without permission. It is Josephus too who lets us know that obedience was practised not merely as a social necessity, for no social body can exist without order and discipline, but as a virtue having for its basis the will of God. For without the disposition of God no man has authority. Hence in the oath taken by a candidate on admission to the congregation he solemnly promised loyalty to all and especially to those in authority, a promise which clearly implies obedience. At the same time he promised that, if he should ever be granted authority himself, he would not use it with arrogance or in any way distinguish himself from his subjects in the matter of dress or ornament. This shows the spirit in which Superiors were expected to act, not seeking benefit for themselves but the good of the community. This is further illustrated by a regulation in the *Damascus Document* intended for the guidance of local Superiors. Each is to give religious instruction to the members of his community. This is to include the works of God, His marvellous acts of power, and past history, by which no doubt is meant religious history. He is to treat his subjects with sympathy in a paternal spirit, and care for them like a shepherd for his flock. The same spirit would be looked for also in the Superior General, who is called the Inspector of all the settlements.

In the foregoing exposition of what may be gleaned of the fundamental elements of the religious life of the sectaries, the development traced has been that from a loosely organised body with married men owning their private property to that of a highly organised religious congregation whose members were celibate and divested themselves of all ownership. Now it might be objected that historical parallels rather suggest that similar religious bodies begin with a strict code of law and tend to relaxation, precisely the opposite course of that described. But these supposed parallels are not really parallel. They are taken from times when it was possible to inaugurate a new religious order or congregation with a strict and austere rule. But the conditions for such a new foundation did not exist when

the Qumran community began its existence. There were no precedents in Jewish history and no accepted ideals which could have made possible the establishment of a monastic body fully developed from the beginning of its existence. Time and experience were required for the development of the organisation and for the conception and growth of austere religious ideals.

Easter Sunday in the Chalfonts

THE spastic shuffles to the altar rail
And does not see what pain his presence gives—
That eyes avert because his movements fail,
And hearts rebuke his Maker that he lives.

Oh you who know not why it is today
You scurry to the beaches and the hills,
And sweep the primrose from the woodland way,
And leave your picnics on the daffodils;

Oh you whose minds accept so small a span,
Whose feet with fetters of machines are shod—
What right have you to pity such a man,
Who to his wheel-chair bears the Risen God?

BARBARA ROCHFORD

THE JACOBITES OF KERALA¹

AS FROM 1 November 1956 India is divided into fourteen States, and one of them is Kerala (pronounced with short a's). This is actually the ancient name of what has been known for centuries as Malabar, the tropically fertile stretch of land lying between the Western Ghats and the coast, and extending from Cannanore to Cape Comorin. It is co-extensive with the States of Travancore and Cochin and part of S. Kanara. It is the home-land of the fourteen million Malayalam-speaking Indians, including between two and three million "Indian

¹ *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas*. An account of the ancient Syrian Church of Malabar, by L. W. Brown, Bishop of Uganda (Cambridge University Press 40s).

Christians of St. Thomas," about half of whom, the Jacobites, are the main subject of this book.

Since the first centuries of the Christian era there has existed a Christian community in South India. Their religious language was Syriac and they were called Syrian Christians. Probably they were an offshoot of the East Syrian Church, in the Persian Gulf area. Whether or not they were converted before that Church fell into the Nestorian heresy, they took the Nestorian tenets from it as a matter of course. They acknowledged the Patriarch of Babylon as head of the Universal Church, and received their Bishops from him. But of their history all down through the centuries until the coming of the Portuguese in 1498, there is no written record. There were no philosophical or theological schools of thought, and no religious art of any importance. But they preserved the ancient Syriac Liturgy, and the centre of their religious life was the Sunday Eucharist or *Kurbāna*. "It was this service," says the author, "which kept the Syrians a truly Christian community, even though they understood little of the meaning of the prayers and readings." But they knew it was the Christian Sacrifice, they believed in the Real Presence, they had the other Sacraments (except Confirmation, according to our author), and they had a great devotion to the Mother of God. Socially, strange to say, they were accepted by their Hindu neighbours as a Christian caste, and came to accept that position themselves. That is why they never attempted to bring non-Christians into the Christian Church. May there not be a connection between the absence of the Sacrament of Confirmation and this lack of evangelistic spirit?

It was with sincere charity that Portuguese ecclesiastics and missionaries set about bringing these Christians into the Catholic fold, but the ways and means used were very different from what would be thought suitable today. However, reconciliation was accomplished, at least formally, by the Archbishop of Goa, Alexis de Menezes, at the Synod of Diamper in 1599. Their leaders abjured the Nestorian heresy and anathematised the Patriarch of Babylon. But when, fifty years later, the Portuguese power was removed through the coming of the Dutch, a large section of the "Christians of St. Thomas" revolted from the Roman obedience. And now an almost Gilbertian situation resulted. Failing to get another Nestorian Bishop, they obtained one from the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, a Monophysite. Thus this section, which had renounced the Nestorian heresy at Diamper, relapsed (so to speak) into the diametrically opposite heresy of the Monophysites. In reality, of course, the doctrines involved meant nothing to them. All they were concerned about was to be free from these meddlesome foreigners and resume their old independent way of life. Such is the origin of the Jacobites of South India, and they

profess the Monophysite tenets just as their ancestors had professed the Nestorian tenets. But they have not remained united. Under British influence, a few joined the Anglican Church and others separated to become the Reformed "Mar Thoma Syrian Church," which has today some 200,000 members. The main body of Jacobites, says the author, "has been torn asunder by disputes arising not from doctrinal differences, but from the clash of persons and their struggle for power. By 1950 the two factions apparently gave up hope of reconciliation and now exist as separately organised churches, the Jacobite, acknowledging the supremacy of the Jacobite Patriarch (of Antioch), and the Orthodox, under the (Indian) Catholicos of the East."

Meanwhile, the other half of the original "Indian Christians of St. Thomas" remained loyal to the Pope and the Faith professed at Diamper. They form today our two ecclesiastical provinces of the Syro-Malabar Rite. Then in 1930 a Jacobite Bishop, Mar Ivanios, was admitted into communion with the Holy See. He has been followed by three other Jacobite Bishops and over 50,000 layfolk. These form the ecclesiastical province of the Syro-Malankara Rite. At present there are about three million Christians in Kerala. Half of these, if not more, are Catholics. Over 300,000 of them belong to the Latin Rite and the rest are "Indian Christians of St. Thomas" in communion with the Holy See. Our only criticism of this excellent book is that its title and plan imply that the genuine "Indian Christians of St. Thomas" today are not the Catholic half but the Jacobite. The author himself writes: "This book is concerned with the section of the (Malabar) Church now called 'Orthodox.'" The title "Indian Christians of St. Thomas" is therefore tendentious and inexact.

Apart from this criticism we have nothing but praise for the book. The author, now an Anglican Bishop, was formerly Principal of a Protestant Seminary at Trivandrum. He gratefully acknowledges the help he has received from Catholics whom he has consulted either personally or in their books. He has related the very complicated history clearly and accurately, and he writes with genuine sympathy of the social and religious life of these people. Particularly valuable are the beautiful translations from the Liturgy of the *Kurbāna* and occasional offices of the Jacobite Church. Presumably they are identical with those used in the Catholic Syro-Malankara Rite, as in 1930 Mar Ivanios and his fellow-Bishops were expressly allowed "to continue the use of the Malankara (Antiochian) Rite." Malankara is the place where St. Thomas was thought to have landed, and another name for the "Indian Christians of St. Thomas" was the Malankara Syrian Church. The Monophysites of Syria (and consequently India) were called Jacobites after James Baradai, their sixth-century organiser.

HAROLD ROPER

REVIEWS

RUSKIN'S DIARIES

The Diaries of John Ruskin 1835-1847, selected and illustrated by Joan Evans and John Howard Whitehouse (Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press 70s).

RUSKIN'S DIARIES will be completed in three volumes, of which the present volume is the first. The first entries were made when Ruskin was only sixteen (in 1835). His descriptive powers already gave promise of what was to come, as for instance the following vignette of one of the loveliest of Alpine lakes, Lungern (not Lungren).

From the top of this hill the Wetterhorns are seen rising, with their triple crest and precipice side, above the beautiful woods of the Brünig, and beneath, the small lake of Lungren, blue or green or of a very beautiful between colour shadowed by the steep hills which hang over it, but with a verdant shadow, an emerald reflection, set like a transparent jewel among raised work of mountains chased with forest.

Ruskin's keen interest in geology is evident in this youthful diary, keen rather than informed. Thus he argues that the summit of the Wetterhorn is granite whereas it is limestone, and refers to the Jungfrau as calcareous whereas the summit is granite. Alpine geology was admittedly in its infancy. He records a meeting of the geological society in 1840 addressed by Agassiz, who drew attention to the polish on the rocks beside glaciers due to the motion of the ice. A member present thought he had disposed of this explanation by pointing out that the rocks far above the glaciers "where no ice could ever come" were also polished. Neither Agassiz nor Ruskin drew the obvious conclusion that the glacier level must at one time have been hundreds of feet higher. It was not the scientific glaciologists, Agassiz, De Saussure and Tyndale, who deduced that the glaciers must have at one time extended far beyond their present limits but a simple chamois hunter, named Perrandier, who suggested this as the explanation of an erratic boulder of granite lying on the limestone near Neuchatel.

My only criticism of this scholarly edition is that it might have been improved by more notes, as for instance on this reference to Agassiz' lecture; and when we are assured that "foreign names have been given their normal form" it is a little disconcerting to be informed that Ruskin drove down from "Lauterbrunn" to "Interlakken." And I am sure that I am not the only reader who is curious to know whether there is the slightest foundation for the theory that the

Slavonians who had been driven out of Mysia by the Bulgarians made their way to Rome via Troy.

On most of the journeys described in these diaries Ruskin was accompanied by his parents, but I can only recall two references to them, and I do not think I can have missed many such references. The impression created throughout is that of a solitary wanderer. There is not one hint in these diaries that he ever felt the slightest affection for either of them. Places meant more to Ruskin than people. Of Venice he writes in 1841:

Thank God I am here! It is the Paradise of cities and there is moon enough to make half the sanities of earth lunatic, striking its pure flashes of light against the grey water before my window; and I am happier here than I have been these five years. . . . I feel fresh and young when my foot is on these pavements. This and Chamouni are my two bournes on earth [a confession which he was to repeat in *Modern Painters*].

Lord Conway told me that towards the end of his life Ruskin remarked that as he grew older he cared less for art and more for nature, particularly mountains.

Ruskin did a certain amount of rough and easy scrambling and his nearest approach to a real peak was the Buët, on which he ran into a little light rain. He makes an absurd fuss about the mild discomfort involved in the ascent of this very easy mountain. "It was a desperate day—a regular choker."

Mountaineering is an ascetic sport, that is, a sport in which the price paid for happiness is the mortification of the flesh. Ruskin was essentially soft and the soft are often envious of the ascetic. Much of what passes for pacifism or anti-militarism is nothing more than the rationalisation by the soft of their dislike of the asceticism of the front-line trenches.

Ruskin's famous attack on the Alpine Club, "The Alps themselves which your own poets used to love so reverently you look upon as soaped poles in a bear garden, which you set yourselves to climb and slide down again with 'shrieks of delight'" was in part no doubt a genuine protest against the lack of interest of so many mountaineers for the historic associations of Switzerland, but was also influenced by an uneasy feeling that it was not softness alone which prevented him becoming a mountaineer.

Nobody has analysed with greater discernment the educative value of danger in the mountains as elsewhere. In a letter to his father he wrote:

The question of the moral effect of danger is a very curious one,

but this I know and find, practically, that if you come to a dangerous place, and turn back from it, though it may have been perfectly wise to do so, still your character has suffered some slight deterioration; you are to that extent weaker, more lifeless, more effeminate, more liable to passion and error in the future; whereas if you go through with the danger, though it may have been apparently wrong and foolish to encounter it, you come out of the encounter a stronger and better man, fitter for every sort of work and trial, and nothing but danger produces this effect.

I have dwelt on this point because as Mr. Wilenski, if I remember aright, says self-indulgence was the only real fault in Ruskin's noble character. Of the eminent Victorians few have had a greater and more enduring influence on their contemporaries, and the many recent additions to books about Ruskin is welcome evidence of his increasing prestige. All lovers of Ruskin will be grateful for the care and scholarship with which these fascinating diaries have been edited by Dr. Evans.

ARNOLD LUNN

PRINCESS MARIE LOUISE

My Memories of Six Reigns, by Her Highness Princess Marie Louise (Evans 30s).

THE DEATH of Princess Marie Louise, so soon after the publication of this autobiography, gives to her book a singular significance. It is more than a swan-song. It is, in fact, a kind of "pastoral charge": for it shows above all else that true happiness is to be found in service: the service of God and man.

In a sincere and unaffected manner the Princess describes the circumscribed life of royalty and the devotion to duty which is so characteristic of our present royal house. In this ceaseless round she played a subsidiary but no inconsiderable part. As *The Times* said after her death: "her energy never flagged, her sense of public duty never failed, and to the end she retained a cheerfulness that must often have covered a burden of weariness." It is clear from her book that she was no mere figure-head on committees and that she threw herself heart and soul into all the labours assigned to her.

Her burden in this respect was lightened by her sense of humour and by her intense interest in all the individuals with whom she came in contact. Her range of friends and acquaintances was boundless, and as the years rolled on the old remained at the same time as new ones were established. Like Queen Mary, she had a passion for collecting and a sense of history which is reflected in her writing.

It is clear from this book that her life of service was a deeply happy

one, despite the many sorrows that she had to endure. She faced her trials with great courage and without bitterness and forgot self in the whirl of new responsibilities.

These "memories" are always interesting and refreshing. The Princess had the gift of interspersing her narrative with pleasing anecdotes. She is never pompous or inhuman and her own character is "writ large" in these pages without egoism. Indeed she emerges as a simple, straightforward and dynamic personality of very considerable intelligence.

Her final paragraph indicates the true source of her strength: "I have already told you that my religion and faith have been the anchor to which I have clung through all my life, with its many difficulties, its joys and sorrows. There is no other anchor and, with that assurance, I say Farewell." May she rest in peace.

W. GORDON WHEELER

REPRESENTING THE PAST

Recent Archaeological Excavations in Britain, edited by R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford (Routledge 42s).

ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE cultural features of the post-war years has been the great expansion of archaeology, both as an academic discipline, as a multiform technique, and as a subject of general interest. As a result archaeology "sells." It has, or can have, the combined fascinations of social history, detective work and a treasure hunt. A tractor driver may strike gold to the tune of a thousand pounds, an excavator may find that a prehistoric man was done to death with a piece of flint, and a speleologist may stumble upon an unsuspected masterpiece of rock painting in the bowels of the earth. The volume under review must be one of the most fascinating books of the year. Well written, well edited and well illustrated it hits almost exactly the line between wind and water; it is neither too learned nor too popular; in each chapter an expert describes his discovery, in some cases for the first time in full, but he is addressing his fellow-men, not his fellow experts and technicians. Only in one contribution is there a hint of the half-hour "talk," and only in one other does the reader have to pause and collect his wits with one finger on a diagram and another on the text.

The selection both of topics and authors shows excellently the wide range of the science (or art) and the distinction of its practitioners. We move from the squalid sub-glacial neolithic fishing camp of Star Carr to the lost village of early Tudor days, from a Mithraeum on Hadrian's Wall to another by Walbrook in buried London, from the

dazzling finds at Snettisham and Sutton Hoo to the posts and shards of the motte at Abinger. We can see other techniques being called in aid to the diggers—the pollen test, the measurements of annual silt and annual growth, the chemical assay, and the aerial photograph. The very digging has now become an affair of exquisite precision as skins of deposit are removed, levels taken, objects plotted and every layer photographed. Hitherto for almost three centuries, each generation of archaeologists has cursed the blundering destruction of its predecessors, but now at last something like adequacy of method has been attained.

The editor, Mr. Bruce-Mitford, from his key positions at the British Museum and Burlington House, has been able to assemble a very distinguished company. Sir Mortimer Wheeler is here, with a discovery in Romano-British history as well as in archaeology; Professor Ian Richmond prefaces his unveiling of a military temple with what must be the best brief account of Mithraism in print; Professors Grahame Clark and Grimes show what may be rescued from a remote peat-hag and from the cellars of Cornhill; Mr. J. G. Hurst tells how history with its records may point the site and interpret the discoveries for the digger. Many will find the chapter on the lost villages of England, with its illustrations, the most appealing of all, while in the last chapter but one Dr. K. St. Joseph, to whom so many of the photographs are due, and who himself has pointed the way to discoveries in almost every period, tells how a new technique has augmented and displayed the known riches that lie under the grass and ploughlands of Britain. There is no tail to Mr. Bruce-Mitford's team; the twelfth man might well have gone in first, and the umpire's pages at the end show a knowledge of all the rules of the game.

DAVID KNOWLES

TALK ABOUT GOD

God the Unknown, and other Essays, by Victor White, O.P., S.T.M.,
(Harvill Press 18s).

IT IS A REAL LOSS that Fr. Victor White is so reluctant to write a book. A few years ago we had to be content with a collection of essays on psychology in its relation to theology, and now it is another collection of essays on philosophy and theology that he offers us. In both cases, however, the essays are well worth preserving in the form of a book, so that we will not prolong the grumble that he abstains from anything on a larger scale.

To review all of a considerable number of essays on different topics is impossible. We shall select for discussion here what Fr. Victor has

to say to man's knowledge of God in the essays on "The Unknown God," "Talk About God" and "Prelude to the Five Ways." Of the rest we might recommend especially a serene presentation of "The Background to Papal Infallibility" and a treatment of "The Atonement" in which the materials for a Thomistic synthesis of the theology of the Redemption are admirably, but all too briefly, brought together.

The problem of man's knowledge of God is evidently the question where to draw the line between anthropomorphism and agnosticism. While the religious man must insist that we know enough about God to be able to love and worship Him, he must not forget that God is essentially mysterious in His absolute and infinite being. Fr. Victor draws the line rather nearer to agnosticism than we find satisfying. He begins in the usual way with the analogy of attribution, by which we know God as the source of all that is positive in the natures of created things. But that, he agrees, does not yield any intrinsic knowledge of God. Our intrinsic knowledge of God, he maintains in the traditional manner of Cajetan, depends on the analogy of proper proportionality. God's wisdom and goodness are to God as the wisdom and goodness of creatures are to the natures of those creatures. Fr. Victor stops at this point. He will not admit that there is any direct similarity between the wisdom and goodness of God and the wisdom and goodness of creatures. This, the so-called analogy of inequality, he holds, is not really analogy at all. It is reducible to the univocal, and, if it were applied to our knowledge of God, it would make this hopelessly anthropomorphic.

Can we really stop at this point? So far God is an unknown *X*, and His goodness, for example, is an unknown *Y*. Does it tell us anything to say merely that *X* is to *Y* as men are to human goodness? And what about this relationship or proportion itself? Is it identical in the two cases, or simply similar, or merely proportionately similar again? Where do we go on from that? The difficulty is far from being original, but it is even farther from being solved.

Of course, Fr. Victor also offers us the *via eminentiae*, by which we hold that God transcends the perfection of the most perfect things we know. Yet we must ask what is needed in order to give meaning to this way of transcendence. We must be able to distinguish degrees of perfection in this or that respect among the objects of experience in order to be able to find a *direction* in which God indefinitely transcends empirical values. But, if God is to be described in this direction, however unknowably far beyond the empirical objects which exemplify it, there must be a certain basic similarity between God and creatures by which we can significantly say that creatures reflect God and that God is the infinity of that being which we attribute in its finite modes to the things that we know.

If this seems unduly anthropomorphic, it is surely because we have at the back of our minds the prejudice that similarity implies commensurability and is therefore inapplicable to the relationship between infinite and finite being. But it is clearly erroneous to suppose even that finite magnitudes are necessarily commensurable. To say that something is twice as hot as something else is strictly meaningless. Only extensive magnitudes are properly commensurable. Still less does it follow from saying that there is a genuine similarity between knowledge as belonging to God and knowledge as belonging to creatures that these modes of knowing belong to the same order and are precisely comparable. There must be such a fundamental similarity if it is meaningful to attribute knowledge of God at all, but the way and extent to which divine knowledge transcends human knowledge remain unknowable and indeterminable in principle. It is these dimensions of unknowability which surround and safeguard the mystery of God.

It is difficult to reach a happy mean between a Hebraic acceptance of anthropomorphism in expression which may yield admittance to a mistaken anthropomorphism in conception and a Hellenic insistence on the purification of concepts which may lead much too near to a real agnosticism. A religious philosopher might prefer, if error could not be avoided, to err with the simple-minded rather than lose a living awareness of God. But philosophy itself is capable of correcting philosophy. Only exact similarity is fully univocal. The less exact the similarity, the greater is the part of analogy and the further the dim though real recognition of the intrinsically mysterious. A basic similarity although we cannot define how far it goes and must admit an unknowable region of dissimilarity beyond it, a notion of similarity purged of all anticipation of finite proportion and generic community, is a necessary presupposition of any significant talk about the absolute and infinite being of God in terms of notions derived from human experience.

This debate is not yet closed. If you want to read what is to be said on the other side, read what Fr. Victor has to say in the essays indicated. And we may repeat that, although only one topic has been emphasised here, Fr. Victor's book contains a great deal which is of interest on other philosophical and theological topics.

D. J. B. HAWKINS

LIGHT ON LUNN

Memory to Memory, by Sir Arnold Lunn (Hollis and Carter 21s).

WHEN ONE LEADS the varied sort of life Sir Arnold Lunn leads and can write as imaginatively as he does, an easily-read

autobiography of quality is almost a foregone conclusion. *Memory to Memory* has other merits as well. Whereas the forty-odd works Lunn already had to his credit displayed separately the different levels on which he has lived and the wide range of his interests, this book brings all the parts together to make a picture of the whole man. Those of us who hitherto only knew Lunn the searcher for religious truth, the exponent of world chaos in terms of a flight from reason and the defender of unpopular causes such as that of Nationalist Spain can here make the acquaintance of the ski pioneer, the guide to places of beauty and the man who has found himself in many unique, exciting or amusing situations. I think offhand of his presence in the Headquarters of Fighter Command at an early stage of the war as an Air Marshal fought successfully against the Prime Minister to spare the planes that were later so useful in the Battle of Britain, or again of the embarrassment of being introduced to a Continental audience as an authority on mines and miners when he had never seen a mine or a miner in his life. Or, once more, the casting of lots for the chop left over at a literary dinner when belts were very tight at the height of rationing. There are many similar touches in *Memory to Memory* (which I have marked for quotation to my friends) as one would expect from the inventor of FIF (the Funny Inside Feeling of *Now I See*) and the well-known limerick about the Old Man of Moldavia.

But these are all small things compared with his earnest striving for justice in Spain and elsewhere and smaller still in relation to the fact of his conversion to Catholicism. That change was so tremendous that it now affects everything he does and colours his view of events past and present. It runs through this book of memories, affecting his judgment of men and affairs, and lights up his recollection of his family and friends. He recalls how sympathetic, for example, his father always was to the Catholic Church and how gratefully he died in a Catholic hospital. His mother, although the daughter of an Irish Protestant clergyman, he remembers praying secretly in Catholic churches that her son might become a missionary. In a sense her wish has been granted for, having argued himself into the Church, Sir Arnold has shown much zeal in arguing the Catholic case with others, including the late C. E. M. Joad. Lunn's exchange of letters with Joad which is the basis of *Is Christianity True?* played a part in Joad's becoming a Christian and proved to be the foundation stone of a real friendship which permitted both parties to say frankly what they thought of each other but without rancour. Sir Arnold's account of what they spoke about and his penetrating analysis of Joad's character are among the many fine things in a book which, it is safe to forecast, will have many readers.

LEON O'BROIN

SHORTER NOTICES

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by Dr. Pierre Barbet, with an appendix by P. J. Smyth (Clonmore and Reynolds 16s).

DR. BARBET'S BOOK, here excellently translated from the French by the Earl of Wicklow, is one of the best of the works advocating or presupposing the genuineness of the Holy Shroud. The fact remains, however, that, now that Gaechter has come out strongly on the other side, not one of the best gospel critics is disposed to accept the Shroud's authenticity. Why are the modern scientific tests not applied to the Shroud? This would surely settle the question once for all.

Apart, however, from his use of the questionable Shroud evidence, Dr. Barbet's study of Our Lord's physical sufferings possesses considerable merit. It is based on the scriptural and other archaeological evidence, supplemented at certain points by his own anatomical experiments (he is a surgeon at a Paris hospital). Dr. Barbet has read Holzmeister, Lagrange and de Grandmaison with profit, and his detailed reconstruction of the scourging, carrying of the cross, crucifixion and burial is generally accurate. His view that the immediate cause of death was asphyxiation arising from the crucifixion is less convincing.

Since a factual account of ancient Roman scourging and crucifixion must have something of the quality classified in the cinema world as H, the question arises: does such knowledge conduce to pious meditation on the Passion? The answer, unless we are prepared to exalt sentimentality, can only be "Yes." While it is important that our thoughts should dwell less on the external events and physical sufferings than on the Person our Saviour and the interior dispositions which led Him to suffer for our sakes, yet our contemplation will be unrealistic unless informed and coloured by some knowledge of what was involved in the Passion, and of how hardly our Redemption was won.

They Saw His Glory. An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts, by Maisie Ward (Sheed and Ward 16s).

THIS BOOK is not intended for the Marble Arch heckler who partly inspired it, but for the "average educated man," such as found Mr. Sheed's *Theology and Sanity* useful. The Scriptures are rather like Catholic doctrine as a whole: you can begin almost anywhere, only to find that you are bound to proceed in almost every direction till a "whole" is constructed, or rather, discovered. The Introduction, which often invokes archaeology, leads most helpfully not only to the understanding of the Old Testament but to the New Testament perspective. For after all, the Evangelists, and even St.

Paul, had minds only slightly, when at all, touched by Greek culture and were certainly not Latinised. It would of course be possible to differ on small points: we do not think that "immediately" was more than a pet word of St. Mark's or had anything to do with rapidity: in parallel accounts St. Matthew uses "then" without meaning more than a vague "afterwards." St. Paul did not see an inscription: "To the Unknown God," but "To an Unknown God," *i.e.*, "to a god—I don't know which and cannot name him." On the other hand, one cannot assert so dogmatically that "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" is wrong: true, "Great" was a cult-title of the Ephesian Artemis, but it is not, we think, the best group of manuscripts that leaves out the definite article before the goddess's name, and what the crowd at Ephesus meant was: "Our Artemis is Great—the Great One!" Such tiny details in no way detract from the precious value of this book: we are glad that it obstinately adheres to the early dating of the gospels and *Acts*, and sees that *Acts* (with St. Paul's earlier Letters) are all-important as showing the *faith* of the first Christians, while the Synoptists provide, more nearly, their original *catechism*: we too marvel at the "meagre ration of doctrine so often offered today to a laity of long hereditary Christianity," when St. Paul could write as he did to the raw Corinthian converts, not afraid of the sublimest mysticism.

The Maid of Orleans, by Sven Stolpe, translated by Eric Lewenhaupt (Burns and Oates 25s).

THERE IS ALWAYS ROOM for another book on St. Joan, and this latest study emanating from Sweden has much to recommend it. The author is inclined to lean over backwards in his efforts to disentangle what he holds to be the real St. Joan from "the mass of superstition, gossip and pious nonsense" surrounding her. This leads him into making some disputable assertions such as that Joan was never in active command of the army and that it was Dunois who set Orleans free and La Hire who won the battle of Patay. If that were so one cannot help wondering why they and the rest of the King's generals should have been so markedly unsuccessful right up to the moment when Joan joined the army. He also minimises the court intrigues against her authority, even going so far as to white-wash La Trémouille. On the other hand he shows a sensitive understanding of the mystical side of the saint's character, a side which, oddly enough, is too often inclined to be overlooked. For the important thing about her as a saint was not her Voices; it was her love of God as shown in her character, her habits and her piety. And it was on this side, not upon the nature or value of her revelations, that the Church laid emphasis when her

canonisation was pronounced. Mr. Stolpe has an uneven style of writing which, one gets the impression, has not been greatly helped by his translator.

New Lives for Old, by Margaret Mead (Gollancz 25s).

WHEN DR. MEAD, the anthropologist, returned recently to a village in New Guinea, twenty-five years after her first visit, she saw the results of what she regarded as a unique and highly instructive experiment. She maintains that, as a result of their wartime experiences and the rise of an indigenous leader, these people have made a remarkably quick journey from the primitive world to the modern. Her conclusion is that, for simple communities of this kind, gradual and piecemeal adaptation to "western" ways is disastrous; they must, like immigrants to America, turn their backs on the old mode of life, and accept the new in its entirety.

This might be more convincing if there were any evidence that the Manus have in fact been able successfully to slough off the old skin and to wear the new with confidence. But the portrayal which Dr. Mead herself gives is that, all too familiar, of a hopelessly sophisticated people, who have largely lost their own institutions, and taken over a grotesque parody of those of someone else. For example, they think of themselves as Catholics, but they have left the mission, refused confession, and adopted divorce and ideas of sorcery and reincarnation. Their law, education and economy seem to be in an equally parlous state. One young Manus, after his second attempt at suicide, kept saying, "But there is no use my lying. My thoughts are not yet straightened out. In this state of mind I can promise nothing." There must be a moral in all this, but it is patently not the rather pretentious and at the same time naïvely optimistic one which is drawn by Dr. Mead.

St. Benedict and His Monks, by Theodore Maynard (Staples Press 15s).

IN 240 PAGES this book gives a highly condensed but clear picture of Benedictine monasticism in the past fourteen centuries. Starting with the story of St. Benedict, the author shows how, in the providence of God, he became an instrument for the stability and regeneration of European society, although he had no other idea in his mind but to forsake the world and lead the life of a hermit in the Sabine Mountains near Rome. Then we are given an idea of the nature and scope of the Holy Rule, and the important part played in monastic life by the Divine Office. The Benedictine vows of stability, conversion of manners and obedience are explained. Other chapters are devoted to Benedictine Life, Monks as Missionaries, the Benedictine Scholar, and a

sketch of Benedictine History. The Development and Divergencies of the original ideal, *e.g.*, the Cistercians and the Cluniacs, are dealt with, but not so fully as they deserve. There is a comprehensive bibliography and a useful index.

Burke Street, by George Scott-Moncrieff (Richard Paterson 8s 6d).

ALTHOUGH it is almost two hundred and fifty years since Edinburgh ceased to be an active capital, she has always refused to accept provincialism. It is against this background that *Burke Street* should be read. In eight deft, if sharply etched vignettes the author presents Burke Street between the wars. Built outside the bounds of the "West End" and named after an obscure hero of the '45, Burke Street failed to secure recognition as "a good address." This failure is reflected in the characters of the residents, who are nice people, but acutely conscious of their gentility, "connections," and environment.

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